

To members of the appropriations committee,

My name is Christina Samela and I attend The Sound School Regional Vocational Aquaculture Center in New Haven, CT as a junior. Thank you for providing the opportunity to present information pertaining to the proposed legislation regarding the importance of funding a well-developed Biotechnology curriculum to high school students. I chose to take Biotechnology because I have an interest in the material and I was impressed by what I had heard about the quality of the curriculum. Throughout the course we were taught many aspects of Biotechnology such as DNA replication, extraction, and cloning, viruses, conjugation, and genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and also proper lab technique for utilizing equipment such as micro-pipettors, vortexes, an autoclave, electrophoresis boxes, and spectrophotometers. One of the experiments we conducted was extracting DNA from wheat germ and measuring the quantity and purity of its precipitate. We used a variety of the pieces of laboratory equipment stated previously throughout this experiment, and we were fortunate that this was possible and that we had such equipment available to us. However, the school has had this equipment for many years, and it may no longer have the aptitude to function at its prime. The Sound School is a comprehensive town-funded high school which houses the VoAg program. Due to this, minimal funds are allotted to the Biotechnology program each school year, and that amount is not enough to cover the costs of purchasing and maintaining enough optimally functioning equipment to provide students with a thorough understanding of concepts of Biotechnology.

Please increase funding for the agriscience programs by adopting the ECS Task Force School Choice Funding recommendation into the Governor's Proposed Budget. I appreciate this opportunity to appear and I hope you will take time to consider my comments.