

State of Connecticut
Commerce Committee Testimony
February 14, 2013
SB 527

My name is Charlie Clifford and I am the Executive Director of the Woodruff Family YMCA; a branch of the Central Connecticut Coast YMCA in Milford. First and foremost, I want to thank you for hearing this testimony and potentially supporting the charitable purposes of our YMCA. The impact this project will have on our citizens will be tremendous both through programming and job creation; please allow me to describe it.

The YMCA's main facility, located at 631 Orange Avenue in Milford, has nearly 8,400 square feet of unfinished program space on its second floor. Construction documents already exist for the fit out of this space and these plans will allow us to relocate an existing Health and Wellness Center to the second floor as well as create a Kids' Zone for youth and family programming. The space currently occupied by the Health and Wellness Center will be renovated to enlarge the YMCA's full and part day pre-school programs providing for an additional 42 slots. An expanded parking lot is also part of this project. All of the activities offered in these physical spaces strengthen our community's safety net because every YMCA program participant is entitled to a sliding fee scale through the YMCA's financial aid program.

I am excited to present this information to your committee not only because of the impact on children and families in our community but also because it will assist in our state's economic recovery. YMCA staff anticipates 50 additional jobs as a result of this expansion; 9 of which will be full-time positions. YMCA careers are worthwhile, competitive and often lifelong opportunities. They are family-oriented and offer significant benefits including paid time off and retirement.

The Milford delegation, including Senator Slossberg, Representatives Rose, Davis, and Maroney, fully supports this project not only for its charitable purpose but for its return on investment.

A total project cost of \$1.4 million will fund temporary construction jobs over a six month period. I will submit a letter from Haynes Construction as part of my testimony outlining jobs in electrical, mechanical, plumbing, drywall and HVAC. More importantly, there will be significant long term growth in YMCA payrolls. I estimate an additional \$423,000 in increased payrolls annually because the core of YMCA activities operates with child care, health and wellness, and membership personnel.

The YMCA has already raised \$784,000 toward completion of this project. A \$500,000 contribution on behalf of the State of Connecticut will be required to see this project come to fruition and will be the catalyst for the last \$116,000 in funds raised through private contributors.

Finally, I would like to submit a letter of support from our mayor, Benjamin Blake, who is one of our community partners participating in this project. I urge you to visit our YMCA personally and thank you for your consideration of this worthwhile effort for our community and for the State of Connecticut.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "C. R. Clifford".

Charlie Clifford
Executive Director