



HB 5030, An Act Making Adjustments to State Expenditures for the year ending June 30, 2015

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Jesse White-Fresé, Executive Director of the Connecticut Association of School Based Health Centers. On behalf of the Association, we thank you for your continued and ongoing support of School Based Health Centers (SBHCs) and their ability to impact the physical health, behavioral health, and oral health of children in the school setting.

I am here to speak about the midterm budget adjustments as proposed in this bill. The bill does not recommend any revisions to the FY15 appropriation for SBHCs, however, we would like to call your attention to the reduction in the overall SBHC line item between FY14 and FY15. The FY15 appropriation represents a \$109,000 reduction to the FY14 appropriation of \$12.74 million for the operation of more than 85 state-funded SBHCs. This funding for the Centers includes the opening of new SBHC sites and the expansion of existing sites as part of education reform in the Alliance Districts. This initiative, undertaken as part of the Governor's education reform, has increased access to health care for students in 20 low-performing schools in an effort to close the achievement gap. While it is unclear how this reduction will be implemented, this proposed reduction in FY15 funding will reduce the direct services to students that have just expanded to meet their needs.

Our understanding is that this reduction is based on the assumption that under the Affordable Care Act, more uninsured youth would become insured and SBHCs would receive reimbursements for those billable services. However, health insurance data from the 2012 Census for Connecticut indicates that approximately 3.6% of youth under the age of 18 were uninsured for a 12 month period, a relatively small number. It is not known if this small number of youth attend schools with an SBHC or if they are able to become insured. What is clear is that this reduction to the FY15 funding for school based health centers will require reductions to direct patient care services by decreasing hours of operation, closing the SBHCs prior to the end of the school year, and similar actions that impact student access to the services that keep them healthy and in school.

With this in mind, the CT Association of School Based Health Centers formally requests that the \$109,000 reduction to the FY15 appropriation be restored to the FY14 level so that the health and well-being of the children utilizing these services continues uninterrupted.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the FY15 midterm budget adjustments.

Jesse White-Fresé, Executive Director
CT Association of School Based Health Centers, Inc.
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Healthy Kids Make Better Learners

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