



INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA-UAW

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February 19, 2014

To: Senator Bye, Representative Walker and Members of the Appropriations Committee

From: Beverley Brakeman on behalf of Julie Kushner, Regional Director of UAW Region 9A

Good evening Senator Bye, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Beverley Brakeman. I am the political representative for the United Auto Workers Region 9A. On behalf of our Regional Director, Julie Kushner, and our members from UAW Local 2320, we want to urge all of you to preserve stable funding for the state's legal aid programs as proposed by Governor Malloy.

Our members are legal aid attorneys who provide free legal services to low income families in Connecticut. They help victims of domestic violence, people in need of public assistance like Medicaid, HUSKY, and SNAP, families who are homeless, and much more. Every year we come before this committee so I don't need to tell you that every year our members do more work for more people with fewer and fewer resources.

The Governor is a true believer in our members and the services they provide and we applaud this committee for its ongoing support of legal aid funding. Stable funding for these programs means \$1.5 million for general legal aid and \$160,000 for two social workers at New Haven Legal Aid and CT Legal Services respectively to help with child protection caseloads. We are delighted that the social worker at CT Legal Services is a new UAW member.

Additionally, we hope that all of you will support SB 31 which will be raised in the Judiciary Committee in the coming weeks. This is the Governor's proposal to eliminate a sunset provision that, if not eliminated, would cause a devastating funding cliff for our legal aid programs. This proposal would also increase the percentage of these revenues that currently go to legal aid programs. In so doing, our members and the programs for which they work will be able to continue to address the growing needs of the state's poorest residents and cope with other reductions in federal aid that have caused layoffs at Statewide Legal Services just this year.

Thank you.