



BRISTOL
Adult Resource Center

Advocating personal growth and community inclusion for all we serve.

Bristol Adult Resource Center, Inc.

Serving Persons with Disabilities

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Testimony Submitted to the Appropriations Committee:

H.B. No. 6824: An Act Concerning The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2017,
And Making Appropriations Therefor And Other Provisions Related To Revenue.

Submitted By: Judy Gebben, Executive Director
Bristol Adult Resource Center

March 6, 2015

Senator Bye, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Judy Gebben, Executive Director at The Bristol Adult Resource Center. We are among the 500+ member agencies of the Connecticut Association of Nonprofits (CT Nonprofits.)

I would like to share my concerns with H.B. 6824, An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2017, And Making Appropriations Therefor and Other Provisions Related to Revenue. In particular, I wanted to express my sincere concerns to the funding reductions in the Department of Developmental Disabilities / Day Service and Employment. This funding reduction would threaten critical services to individuals and families in our service area.

Bristol Adult Resource Center provides day service and employment support to over 150 individuals in the Greater Bristol Area. As an agency, we focus on preparing people to enter the work force in their community. Many of those we support are respected employees who have obtained competitive employment and earn a reasonable wage. In order to continue this work, we must have the resources needed to provide individuals with skill building opportunities.

The proposed cuts, coupled with four rounds of rescissions/budget modification dating back to late 2012, have put enormous pressure onto an already severely depleted system. The reality is that nonprofit providers have been pushed to our breaking point due to the lack of investment over the past two decades. Chronic underfunding has already forced many nonprofits to close, compete against one another for scarce resources, layoff employees, reduce benefit packages; altogether creating a win or lose system that weakens the entire nonprofit sector and threatens its sustainability.

As members of the Appropriations Committee work toward creating your 'Recommended Budget' for SFY16 and 17, I urge you to restore these harmful cuts to ensure critical programs and services are available to the residents of Connecticut. I'd also like to respectfully remind you that investing in the nonprofit sector will improve service delivery, increase economic activity, and save taxpayer money; a "win-win" for policymakers working to strengthen the economy, the nonprofit workforce trying to make ends meet, and most importantly, the clients and their families who count-on efficient, cost-effective, and high-quality services in our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, or for additional information.

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