

Dear Sir or Madam,

As Chairperson of the Bristol Youth Commission, I was very disheartened to read about the recent proposed cuts to the CT Youth Service Bureaus in the governor's proposed budget. In Bristol, the services provided by our own Bristol Youth Services is inadequate as is due to lack of funding. There is a high need for these services to our families. The number of families dealing with domestic violence, post traumatic stress and other mental health issues that put many of our youth at-risk is critically rising. I have listed below some very important facts regarding the proposed budget cuts:

- * 1. Completely cut of the Enhancement Funding line item of \$620,000.00
- * 2. Cut \$700,000.00 from of the overall YSB Cost Sharing Grant line item from the State Department of Education (SDE) budget.

**The two cuts total a loss of 1.3 million dollars for YSBs.

- * 3. Also of great concern and opposed by CYSA is moving the YSBs from SDE management to be under the management of the Department of Children and Families (DCF). CYSA has forged a collaborative and stable partnership with SDE. Together, we have implemented Results Based Accountability to our work with students. Local YSBs are complementary to local education agencies and an integral part of the infrastructure of the local communities.

It is important to note that in 1978, Public Act 78-183 of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) established Youth Service Bureaus (YSBs). A YSB is defined as an agency operated directly by one or more municipalities, or a private agency designated to act as an agent of one or more municipalities, for the purpose of evaluating, planning, coordinating and implementing services, including prevention and intervention programs for delinquent, pre-delinquent, pregnant, young parents and troubled youth . The statute further states that YSBs shall be the coordinating unit of community-based services to provide a comprehensive delivery of prevention and intervention, treatment and follow-up services. (See C.G.S. 10-19m).

I hope you will support maintaining or increasing the budget for our Youth Service Bureaus, especially supporting our local Bristol Youth Services and all the incredible work they have done for Bristol families and continue to do. Thank you!

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Chairperson, Bristol Youth Services

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"What lies behind us and
what lies before us, are small matters compared to what lies within us."

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

