

## **Testimony Opposing the Bill to Eliminate Funding for Connecticard, Connecticar CLC and Grants to Public Libraries.**

The following is my testimony regarding a bill to eliminate funding for Connecticard, Connecticar, Connecticut Library Consortium and Grants to Public Libraries. Legislation has also been introduced that would also repeal the statutes that authorize these programs:

1. My name is Barry Boodman, and I reside at 215 Library Street, in Mystic, Connecticut
2. I am an attorney admitted in the State of Connecticut, and understand the value of submitted testimony regarding proposed state legislation;
3. I am a Co-President of the Board of Trustees of The Mystic & Noank Library, located in Mystic, Connecticut;
4. Our library is a public library, organized as a non-profit corporation;
5. It serves the communities in the general areas of Noank, located in the Town of Groton, and Mystic, located in both the Towns of Groton and Stonington;
6. These communities self-support the Mystic & Noank Library, except grants, most primary, from the Towns of Stonington and Groton, that equal about ½ of our annual operating expenses;
7. We also receive funding from Connecticard, a program that allows Connecticut library patrons to borrow material from any of the 192 public libraries throughout Connecticut, Connecticar, the service that distributes the shared materials under Connecticard, which averages approximately 3 million items per year, The Connecticut Library Consortium, a statewide membership collaborative serving 99% of Connecticut public libraries through discounted buying of library materials, among other services, State, and other grants that help us meet the public's needs for free access to a public library, including state grants to public libraries, specifically;
8. We are open to the public 6 days a week, including evening hours for 3 of those days;
9. We provide services to our communities that go well beyond local circulation of books. These include, among many others:
  - a. Access to materials available throughout Connecticut through the Connecticard program;
  - b. The resources made possible through our consortium, CLC;
  - c. Access to the internet for those to whom it is not otherwise available;
  - d. Programs and materials for the education of the home-schooled;
  - e. Programs and materials that supplement the education curricula in local schools;
  - f. Programs for children in a safe and secure environment;
  - g. Programs of personal enrichment and self-growth for all categories of residents;
10. None of these programs would otherwise be available in the general area of Mystic and Noank without our library;
11. Connecticard and Connecticar are essential resources to all library users in the State of Connecticut;
12. Likewise, the CLC consortium, is essential to the quality of library services the consortium members can offer their users, and discounts on library materials that will be lost;
13. The loss of the above and state library grants will greatly impair our ability for our residents to meet their needs for library services;
14. Lastly, a state that looks to grow its employment opportunities in technical, scientific, pharmaceutical, and other nuanced and highly skilled areas of employment, will most probably find those who will be the potential candidates in today's Connecticut libraries. Don't throw them out.

Barry Boodman

Co-President of the Board of Trustees

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