

March 5, 2015

**Testimony for March 3, 5pm for the Appropriations Secondary Education Sub-committee-
Governor's Proposed cuts to Youth Service Bureaus**

Dear Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Secondary Education Sub-committee:

My name is Kelly Kulow and I am a resident of Hebron, CT and a staff member of AHM Youth and Family Services in Hebron, CT.

I am writing to you to voice my opposition as a Connecticut taxpayer to the proposed cuts included in the Governor's budget regarding Connecticut's 102 Youth Service Bureaus.

I ask that you please do all that you can to remove the \$1.3 million dollar cut to YSBs from the Governor's proposal, (which includes the entire Enhancement Grant Line Item currently in the budget at \$620,000 and an approximately \$700,000 cut in the Cost Sharing grant that YSBs receive for being a Youth Service Bureau.

As a Receptionist I hear all different stories from clients who come here for services and how grateful they are that to have a resource like AHM to help them out. AHM has professional dedicated staffs who serve the community to the best of their abilities to help where ever they can. The programs we serve fall into categories of mental health services, juvenile justice services, prevention programs, and youth and family development programs. It would be a huge loss for the communities that we serve if these cuts go through. Please consider the harm that will be done if these cuts go through.

The State of Connecticut invests just over 3 million dollars in 102 Youth Services Bureaus statewide. In return those Youth Service Bureaus collectively raise nearly 30 million dollars through the municipalities they serve, through private and public grants, fundraisers and private contributions.

In the last two years YSBs reported having served over 448,000 youth and parents through many of the same programs that our own local youth services (AHM Youth and Family Services) *provides to local* citizens in our four communities. These programs all fall into the categories of mental health services, juvenile justice services, prevention programs, and youth and family development programs.

Please help make sure that these cuts to do not go through!

Thank you,

Kelly F. Kulow