

**Testimony of Diane Hobbs, parent facilitator
concerning funding for Regional Action Councils in**

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.

Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services - March 6, 2015

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Gerratana, Representative Dillon and members of the Appropriations subcommittee, my name is Diane Hobbs. I am offering testimony in strong opposition to the proposed cuts to the regional action councils.

I teach parenting classes in New Canaan and Darien. The program I use is "Active Parenting" which is a federally approved alcohol and substance abuse prevention program as well as being a program that improves communication between parents and their children while still providing positive and healthy discipline strategies to help kids grow up safely.

With the explosion of technology and 24/7 communication today, families are in crisis. Family time is difficult to find when the lines of the work day are blurred because parents are reachable on weekends and late into the night now. Kids have the ability to communicate with peers and friends at the touch of a screen which also bleeds into precious time that was for families only just a few years ago. Parents are taxed with the task of having to say, "no" so often to get that cherished alone time with their children. Alcohol use among teens continues to be widespread. Parents need support to help them manage the technology and communicate with their children and also provide strategies and support systems to keep their children away from alcohol and drugs. Communities 4 Action provides that support through substance abuse awareness, education and prevention initiatives. Their work is critical to families.

Communities 4 Action has supported my program by paying for me to speak at the Father's Forum in Greenwich and by spreading the word about my class offerings to parents. Thanks to their help my classes have been attended by hundreds of parents and my speaking engagements usually bring in 50-70 parents.

Separately their support of the Father's Forum has strengthened the bonds between parents and their teens for years and they continue to do so. The Father's Forum is an excellent model for other communities as well. Communities 4 Action is the one organization I found in our area that brings representatives from numerous groups in the area together to exchange information and experiences with each other while providing critical and up to date research to everyone who attends their meetings.

Thank you
Diane Hobbs

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Parent Connections

www.ctparentconnections.com

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