

As a father to a small child with asthma and other breathing problems I see firsthand how imperative the Asthma Outreach and Education program is. As a part of the Children's Health Initiative speaking out and educating Connecticut citizens on Asthma is not only important for the health of my community but the health of my son. Asthma hospitalizations are nearly 2 to 3 times higher in urban areas as is the rest of the state. Cities like Hartford, Bridgeport, and New Haven over burden state budgets due in part to lack of education. Through the program offered by CCEJ I have learned to identify asthma triggers in my son, as well as how to address my concerns with my doctor to take better control over the care given to my only son. Over the last several years CCEJ has educated hundreds upon hundreds Connecticut residences on ways to recognize asthma triggers, how to reduce triggers and most importantly how to remain healthy and reduce hospitalizations. It is very important to me that I have an ally in my fight to protect my son against this horrible disease and CCEJ is that ally. This testimony is in an effort help make the decisions about the upcoming budget as easy as possible. The funding that has been provided thus far has more than paid for itself with the reduction of hospital visits, specifically in the major cities in Connecticut in which CCEJ works Hartford, Bridgeport, and New Haven. Failure to fund the Children's Health Initiative and thus not funding the Asthma Outreach Education

program will cost the state more money in the long run. The decision is clear we must fund the Children's Health Initiative for the sake of my children and yours.

Sincerely,

Desmond Batts