

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Gerratana, and Representative Dillon.

My name is Joseph Murphy and I am on the Board of Directors for Integrated Health Services, a non-profit organization that oversees 7 School Based Health Centers in East Hartford. I am testifying today on HB 6824.

I have been affiliated with and on the Board of Integrated Health Services for a little more than 10 years and over this time frame, the need today of providing health care services to poor children and their families is extremely important in East Hartford as well as other similar areas in Connecticut.

With the proposed \$1.8 million cut to the School Based Health Centers in Connecticut, the underinsured children in our schools won't receive the care that everyone deserves and this could affect their personal development in years to come. We have seen an double digit increase of students meeting with our staff year after year due to the availability and access of care. The SBHC's do a remarkable job in communicating to the parents, families and students what services are available within each of the schools.

Staff cuts will have to be made if the budget cuts are approved. This means that the children in our schools will not be able to receive the care that everyone deserves and may have to leave school to meet with a nurse, doctor, or dentist. This means that the child will be out of school for an extended period of time and may not even come back to school for the remainder of the day or not even go that day due to their appointment.

This budget cut is based on the assumption that there would be an increase of enrollment in the HUSKY insurance program. As we are all aware, this is not the case. The enrollment in HUSKY has been level and does not anticipate a significant change in this population.

I hope the Governor and the Legislatures would reconsider re-instating full funding for the School Based Health Centers because "Schools and families rely on SBHC's to keep students healthy and in school."

Thank you so much for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Sincerely,

Joseph T. Murphy

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