

Testimony for Public Hearing

Appropriations Committee

February 24, 2015

Jocelyn Thompson

Hello, my name is Jocelyn Thompson. I am a student at Asnuntuck Community College in Enfield, CT. I am here to respectfully testify against the budget cut that is supposed to take place. Community colleges, especially Asnuntuck, are already struggling financially. If you do this, we will be unable to function. Community college is the only way I can receive my education for the time being due to circumstances in my home life. It's not as extravagant as a university might sound, but I've learned a lot in my time there and I get respect and encouragement from every single professor and advisor I've had thus far.

ACC is like a second home to me. My education is very important to me. I am a full time student – I go to school four days a week and all of my classes are three hours long. I'm a Senator of our Student Government Association and the Vice-President of Student Activities. Student Government and Activities have taught me valuable leadership skills and I wouldn't have these skills without school. On top of all of that, I work 20 hours a week. To get to school, I have to walk a mile and a half every day. I've walked in the pouring rain without an umbrella. I've walked in the freezing cold and snow quite a few times this winter – and a couple of times, I had to risk my life and walk on the street because the snow plowers fail to plow the sidewalks correctly.

I work hard for my education – and I can't even afford to get myself to school. If you approve this budget cut for \$1.6 million and tuition rises 12%-15%, I will be unable to pay for school. I feel as if I would be deprived of the education I work so hard for and have the right to receive. This would affect my home life as well. Because I go to school full time, my mother gets a reduction in rent. Without me attending school, the rent would go up and our family would suffer.

As for taking money from DCF, I know people who have to deal with DCF and I have myself when I was a kid. That system is already corrupt and struggling as it is. To even think about putting a budget cut on the people who need it the most, especially kids with no homes is unfeasible to me. I am sincerely asking you to please reconsider this budget cut.

Thank you.