



ACTION FOR BRIDGEPORT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, INC.

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Irena Kandybowicz, *Chairperson*

February 26, 2015

Charles B. Tisdale, *Executive Director*

Public Hearing Testimony
Appropriations Committee
Meeting of February 27, 2015

Distinguished Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons, Ranking members, and members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Charles B. Tisdale and I am the Executive Director/CEO of ABCD, Inc. one of the 10 Community Action Agencies in Connecticut. The testimony that I offer is to echo the pleas that you will receive from other representatives and clients in **opposition to the elimination of the Human Services Infrastructure (HSI) Community Action Program from the Department of Social Services Budget.**

I will not further inundate you with statistical confirming evidence that you will receive from many other sources except to say the negative affect of this action will have a devastating affect on the Greater Bridgeport/Lower Fairfield County region where some of Connecticut's poorest reside or are homeless.

There are, however, a couple of points that are worthy of note for your consideration. The first is that over the last few years Community Action Agencies such as ours have seen the growth of a disturbing phenomenon and that is a request for services from a formerly self-sufficient population. Yes, we are now serving clients from Greenwich, Stamford, New Canaan, Westport, Easton, and on. Each of these families now meet our low income eligibility requirements for services and the elimination of HSI would result in a denial of our services **and they don't deserve that.**

The other point I would make is that the great majority of our clients do not want to be in need of our services for survival. They are the working poor...people who have low paying jobs or actively seeking employment and are in need of temporary assistance while they attempt to restore themselves to self sufficiency. They have paid their dues and deserve your consideration. The elimination of HSI funding for these citizens is cruel and unwarranted punishment to a group that through no fault of their own are in need of assistance.

I ask that you do not lose sight of that need. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Executive Director