

Appropriations Committee Public Hearing on the Dept. of Social Services
Budget
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Nino Kavteladze
Catholic Charities Family Services
Empower People for Success program
PLEASE RESTORE SAFETY NET SERVICES

My name is Nino Kavteladze and I have been working as PSM for 2 years.

Safety net program is very important for our clients. We have clients who are homeless, living in shelters and some are close to eviction. Our clients are trying their best to find jobs and safe housing for their families. Safety net program is essential to provide for clients a little boost to self-sufficiency.

We provide different referrals and information about community and available services such as emergency housing, energy assistance programs, temp agencies names and contact information, up coming job fairs, agencies which can assist creating resumes; child care provider's contacts. I had clients who found jobs within few days after I provided information about companies who would be a good fit for them; some of them started part time work and later became full time employees. It is very important that we provide counseling and financial assistance to help them to become self-sufficient.

Cutting funding for Safety Net program is going to harm our clients and delay their self-sufficiency.

Safety net program helps to reduce number of people who need TANF cash and food stamps.

I had a client single mother of 3 who was suffering from depression; she was scared to live her apartment even to buy food; program clinician and I worked with her for 8 months; counseling and providing information about services in the area; while working with her she enrolled herself in mental health services and started attending individual and group sessions; client was prescribed medication which helped her; Safety Net program assisted client with utility payments; client started applying for jobs. Client was grateful that she received help, advice and referrals which helped her to overcome barriers she was facing on a daily basis.

I can talk and write about many successful cases, about clients who did not have hope, but with Safety net program and a little help they became self-sufficient and were able to take care of their families.

Please do not shred the Safety Net Services Network – too many families need this service.

Nino Kavteladze