

Testimony by Dennis Cahill, Treasurer, Publicly-assisted Housing Resident Network (PHRN) , March 2, 2015, about Money being Removed from the Budget to support Resident Technical Assistance

Good evening and thank you for your time today. My name is Dennis Cahill and I am here as a member of the Board of Publicly-assisted Housing Resident Network, PHRN. I live at 651 State Street, Bridgeport, Connecticut. For 12 years, the mission of PHRN has been to preserve affordable housing throughout Connecticut, specifically the public housing portfolio, and to organize resident-led tenant groups in public housing, educate residents about their rights, and advocate for residents at the local, state , and federal levels for laws that will improve public housing, We are the only statewide resident-led membership group doing this work in the country.

One year ago, in March 2014, PHRN testified before the Housing Committee of the Legislature when CHFA cut \$75,000 of funding from PHRN which we had received for many years. With advice and help from our allies in the Legislature, PHRN was granted \$150,000 from the Appropriations Committee to be administered by the Department of Housing, During the summer of 2014 we devised a workplan and contract with DOH detailing the work we would do with public housing residents going through revitalization. PHRN has followed this agreement to the letter with on-site resident trainings, follow-up leadership meetings, and regional resident education meetings.

PHRN is here again this evening because the entire \$150,000 has been cut from the budget. Without this funding, PHRN is out of business. Our two resident organizers will lose their jobs, the Board will not meet basic expenses, and PHRN will be shut down. We are asking the Appropriations Committee to restore this funding and not undo the work we have done for residents these past 12 years.