

Hello, my name is Dianna Bloom. I am a senior in the Agri-science program at Lyman Hall High School in Wallingford. I am in the Natural Resources class and I am the President of the Lyman Hall FFA Chapter. Next year I am attending Unity College to major in Conservation Law Enforcement. I am here to testify regarding Bill 6824: An act concerning the State budget and I am requesting that the appropriations committee reallocate the Governor's Budget's proposed increases for school choice programs more equitably to include \$7.5 million of those increases for agri-science programs.

I feel that you should increase the bill because every student has the right to have an amazing time in school and my ag class has been my favorite part of the day for nearly four years now. Over the past few years I have done so many activities that a normal high school experience would never offer. Through class I have learned to not just how to identify the local animal species I have learned how to prepare debates, speeches, presentations, and how a specific species fits into the environment. The learning in class just doesn't help me get the grade, it helps prepare me for the world. In my junior year we all switched teachers and classes for a few weeks and we learned how to prepare for an interview, a skill most high schoolers will not graduate with because they were never taught. Besides my agri-science classes I am heavily involved with FFA. FFA is a national organization that connects every ag school in the United States. For me, FFA has opened many opportunities. Just over the summer I attended a national leadership conference in Washington D.C. At this conference I sharpened my leadership skills and realized how lucky I am to be a part of an organization that allows me to connect with people all over this country. I thank my advisor for encouraging me to go because, it helped me determine that I do have the skills to be a successful leader. Without my involvement in FFA and in my agri-science

class I would never have found the college I will be attending in the fall and be so driven to go into my major. Throughout the years, I have watched many kids grow and even in the short months that I have known the freshman, they have grown. Without these classes and opportunities, future students will not be able to find their niche and find a career which normal schools don't offer. The less students that attend these classes the less of a job opportunity they will have in the future. I know I'm going into a field and career that is growing and they are looking for people to fill the spots. Ag schools set students up for so many opportunities that they would never find anywhere else.

In closing please provide more equity by reallocating these school choice increases and give 7.5 million to our agri-science programs, it is not fair to our students to be forgotten about.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dianna Bloom

Lyman Hall FFA Chapter President

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