

Elisa Toro  
Appropriations Hearing  
March 3, 2015

Hello,

My name is Elisa. I am a high school student and I attend the Bridge Academy.

I live in Bridgeport and I am here today because Connecticut needs to unite and work together to put success within reach for every child.

I have been attending a public charter school since the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and I am now a junior in high school.

When I first started at Bridge Academy I was a bit unaccustomed to the learning experience. But with my mom and teachers encouraging me I started to excel in my classes.

The opportunities, college prep, and support they provide for students are amazing. My teachers have provided me with all the tools I need to strive.

My senior year in high school is months away. I can truly say that I am well prepared for the life that lies ahead because of the support of my school. I'm hopeful about what the future has in store for me.

Governor Malloy's proposed budget does a lot to help students across Connecticut but we still have a lot more to do. We must continue to invest in high-quality options that can dramatically improve results for students like me.

I need Connecticut's elected representatives to stand with my mom and me. We need our elected leaders to stand with all parents and kids who are demanding great schools for every child. The time to act is now.

As a Bridgeport student who has friends and family in district schools, this is not about district vs. charter. It's about quality schools PERIOD. It's simple: Families want high-quality schools.

We need to expand access to quality charter schools — schools where children like me can live up to their potential, to highest heights possible.

Every child deserves a great school! Thank you.