

“Testimony for March 3, 5pm for the Appropriations Secondary Education Sub-committee”

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Secondary Education Sub-committee:

My name is:

William Eyberse

305 Old Canterbury Turnpike

Norwich, CT 06360

I serve as an Alderman for the City of Norwich and I am writing this testimony in support of Youth Service Bureaus across the state and Norwich Youth Services in particular. I'm sure you are aware, that YSBs have been cut by 45% in the Governor's upcoming budget. Their entire Enhancement Grant has been eliminated. This total of \$620,000 was dispersed across 102 Youth Service Bureaus. Their SDE statewide cost sharing grant of \$2,989,268 was reduced by \$700,000. This too, is allocated across 102 YSBs. Under the State Department of Education, YSB money has always been considered in the package of aid to municipalities. The partnership with municipalities requires a cost sharing match, which towns and cities invest in their youth. Moving YSBs out of SDE and placing them under DCF, allow the cut to their basic cost sharing grant and will impact costs to towns and cities which support them.

In addition, YSBs have spent many years working with SDE to develop data collection systems and an RBA framework to quantify their work with Connecticut's youth. They stand out for their Juvenile Justice work in communities and, in fact, Norwich has just become one of 6 Connecticut towns to be picked for the “Engaging Elected Officials in Juvenile Justice Reform” project with the CT Youth Services Association (CYSA), in partnership with the National League of Cities (NLC) Institute for Youth, Education and Families.

My concern is that cutting funding to YSBs increases the financial obligation to cities and towns and endangers Norwich YSBs ability to leverage additional funding. In 2013-2014, Norwich Youth Services was able to leverage \$434,565 because of the money given by the State Department of Education for Norwich's YSB.

Please reconsider the cuts as they stand. This could devastate Youth Service Bureaus across the state.

Sincerely,
William Eyberse
Alderman
City of Norwich