

6 March 2015

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

My name is Megan Coffey and I am a resident of Coventry, Connecticut and a faculty member at RHAM High School.

I am writing to you as a concerned educator of teenagers, and as a witness to the diverse and increasing battles teens experience living healthy and peaceful lives. I am in opposition as a Connecticut taxpayer to the proposed cuts included in the Governor's budget regarding Connecticut's 102 Youth Service Bureaus.

I ask that you please do all that you can to remove the \$1.3 million dollar cut to YSBs from the Governor's proposal, (which includes the entire Enhancement Grant Line Item currently in the budget at \$620,000 and an approximately \$700,000 cut in the Cost Sharing grant that YSBs receive for being a Youth Service Bureau.

The State of Connecticut invests just over 3 million dollars in 102 Youth Services Bureaus statewide. In return those Youth Service Bureaus collectively raise nearly 30 million dollars through the municipalities they serve, through private and public grants, fundraisers and private contributions.

Here at RHAM, the AHM Youth Services Group has served the community by offering physical, social and emotional support to so many of my students. They wouldn't have the resources otherwise and in some cases, the program's support has kept them alive and connected to something that has meaning. Furthermore, because of their experiences with AHM, several of my students have gone on to careers in youth and social services. A field that we are well-aware does not compensate as it should. Their sole pull is to help others as they have been helped and it is tragic to think the collapse of youth services might be one more example of a much needed system disintegrating while the most corrupt and most lucrative thrive.

Please help make sure that these cuts to do not go through!

Thank you,

*Megan Coffey
RHAM High School English*