

## **Testimony for March 3, 5pm for the Appropriations Secondary Education Sub-committee**

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

My name is Katelyn Donahue and I am a resident of Andover, CT. I am a student at RHAM High School in Hebron, CT and presently in my junior year. I serve as a youth representative on the Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention Task Force, the Board of Directors and the Youth Leadership Commission for AHM Youth and Family Services in Hebron, CT.

As members of the Appropriations Secondary Education Sub-Committee, I am writing to you today to voice my opposition as a future Connecticut taxpayer to the proposed cuts included in the Governor's budget regarding Connecticut's 102 Youth Service Bureaus.

The Governor's proposal of a 1.3 million dollar cut to YSB's [including the entire Enhancement Grant Line Item currently in the budget at \$620,000 and an approximate \$700,000 cut in the Cost Sharing grant which YSB's receive for being a Youth Service Bureau] must be removed. I am counting on you to do everything possible to make sure this happens. YSB's help to provide a better quality of life for youth and their families in their respective communities within the state of Connecticut.

As a student, from my elementary years through high school, I have gained a lot of knowledge from school programs to reduce and eliminate substance abuse, internet safety, mental health, suicide prevention and bullying to name a few. I have seen firsthand how these programs have helped my peers and supported them. All of these programs have been funded through our local youth services bureau, AHM. A reduction of the financial support from the state will hurt our youth state wide and in turn their families. This is not good for Connecticut.

Please, do everything in your power to make sure these cuts do not go through.

Thank you for your consideration in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Katelyn E. Donahue