

March 2, 2015

Re: H.B. No. 6824 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2017, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR AND OTHER PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE

I am writing due to my concern over the proposed budget cuts to Youth Service Bureaus across the state. As a current student at Glastonbury High School, I have benefited firsthand from the invaluable services that these organizations provide. The influence of the Youth Service Bureau in my hometown is powerful and incredibly apparent among the students I meet every day.

The programs run by these Bureaus are hugely varying in type, but always top-notch in quality. From individual counseling to group community service opportunities, to musical theatre productions to local television broadcasts, every opportunity is carefully planned and flawlessly executed. With the incredibly capable and generous staff, any venture is possible. Students are able to broaden their horizons and be part of a supportive group, all within minutes of their schools and homes.

In many cases, these Bureaus are already struggling to maintain the services they promise to provide. State funding for these groups could even be classified as minimal, considering the numerous programs they run on a daily basis. Few employees are left to run a complicated but essential operation, providing a positive and safe environment for growing adolescents. If their budget is cut even further, who knows what impact it would have on the teens who rely on the Bureau.

In closing, I would certainly say that the Youth Service Bureau in my hometown has had a hugely positive impact on my life, helping me with my current situation and preparing me the inevitable struggles of the future. Without the Youth Service Bureau, I don't know where I would be today. And I am sure that many Connecticut residents would say the same.

Sincerely,

Katherine Obedzinski

Glastonbury, CT