

**Testimony of Alice Knapp, The Ferguson Library
concerning funding for Regional Action Councils in**

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.

Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services - March 6, 2015

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Gerratana, Representative Dillon and members of the Appropriations subcommittee, my name is Alice Knapp, President of The Ferguson Library, Stamford, Ct. While I understand that cuts are necessary and perhaps it is important to consider approaching the budget in new and innovative ways, I don't want the state to lose strategies that are working. In the case, I am concerned about proposed cuts to the regional action councils.

In my community, Communities 4 Action (formerly Lower Fairfield County Regional Action Council) has been very effective in providing education, and training for substance abuse prevention as well as related community concerns such as behavioral health, violence, gambling, drunk driving, prescription drugs, opioids and suicide. Communities 4 Action does a lot more such as the medication drop box project (communities drives to collect prescription drugs); but The Ferguson Library has been most exposed to education efforts.

The Ferguson Library has worked alongside Communities 4 Action in committees such as Stamford Focus on Youth/List. Recently, Communities 4 Action has arranged for (and provided) training to Ferguson Library staff on *Understanding Opiate Addiction: What is it, and Warning Signs*. Using area experts, the program included what is occurring in Stamford as well as what to do if you are the first person on the scene for someone who has overdosed.

Thank you.