

Testimony of Gerald B. Rakos, MD, Chair, Department of Pediatrics, Stamford Hospital

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 Gerald Rakos and I am offering testimony in strong opposition to the proposed cuts to the regional action councils.

As Chair of Pediatrics at Stamford Hospital for the past 12 years I have seen first-hand the many ways Communities 4Action (formerly Lower Fairfield County Regional Action Council) has impacted positively in our community. We have had a wonderful working relationship as they have organized numerous forums including vital issues such as substance abuse in teens, addictions services, suicide prevention and other mental health issues. Their skills and fund of knowledge combined with the hospitals access to many community pediatricians has facilitated dissemination of important information and program updates. There is no agency to my knowledge that is as well equipped to continue their work should they cease to exist secondary to these draconian cuts. With addiction rates of heroin and other opioids increasing dramatically, this is not the time to significantly reduce funding to such agencies.

I respectfully ask that these funding cuts be reconsidered.

Thank you.