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Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Gerratana, Representative Dillon and members of the Appropriations Committee, good evening. Thank you for this opportunity to speak before you on HB:6284. I am Angela Matera, Nurse Practitioner for the Community Health Center, Inc. and I work in two urban charter schools in Stamford and I serve over 320 students. CHC is providing care in over 180 community and school locations and specifically to over 12,500 student/patients. I am joined by Jamie Rosenthal, clinical social worker at CHC's school based health center at New Britain High School, with a population of over 2500 students in New Britain, and Alissa Piascik, clinical social worker at CHC's school based health centers of 800 students in at Broad Brook Elementary and East Windsor Middle School.

Research over the past decade illustrates a direct positive impact of attendance rates of students who are enrolled in school based health centers and an increase in GPA over time for mental health users. I've provided references to the research in a bibliography attached to the written testimony.

It is further illustrated by the stories of students enrolled in the school based health center where I practice.

One student with a gastrointestinal ailment missed a total of 79 days of classes in his previous school. Through working with him, his mother and the school, we reduced his total absences in this current school year so far to a total 16. School based health center have made a significant difference in this young man's life this past school year. I would be glad to answer any further questions you have about how we helped this patient.

Alissa Piascik has some additional thoughts to share.

Good evening, my name is Alissa Piascik and I am a behavioral health therapist at Broad Brook Elementary and East Windsor Middle School. I am currently seeing thirty patients at the school, and the vast majority would not have been treated for psychiatric disorders outside of the school setting.

Treating children for psychiatric disorders early is important for the children's wellbeing, as well as the wellbeing of those around them. In the long run, it saves the state money by treating issues before they become more expensive. Besides the cost savings, there is our responsibility to one another and Jamie Rosenthal has a story that illustrates this.



Serving underserved and uninsured patients at Connecticut's largest network of community health centers.