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hopefish8819@gmail.com  
Thursday, April 23, 2015 12:56 AM  
AppTestimony  
ehammerling@ctwoodlands.org; M Hope Fish

Dear Appropriations Committee,

Although you don't know me I spent a good part of the day with you during the Public Hearing regarding CIA fund and Section 5 of House Bill 6825. I wanted you to know I don't envy your job. These are times of cuts, eliminations, and austerity measures. Connecticut has many fine Departments fulfilling their mission statements, following protocol in new situations. Connecticut also is home to many dedicated citizens, reaching out to improve the quality of life thru nonprofits 501(3)c that subsist on grants and donations both which shrivel as the economy staggers.

I listened and thought about who I would cut, but then I thought I might be biased. There must be a way. There MUST be a way to problem solve across the agencies. In order to survive the future, changes need to be made with foresight to address now and projected budget limits. I know this is thinking outside the box, but perhaps an answer lies with these words, and someone will see it.

At the main residential campuses (DOC, DMH\_DMR, Colleges)  
2 big line items on budget (besides OT and WC) are Food and Energy costs.  
There is plenty of land around these facilities, state land nearby, nonprofit land in these areas,  
Needs: Labor: men and women at these facilities. No free ride.. everyone can do something.

Some can do stats, calculations, estimations on food needed for meals per day week, month they can calculate food per acre, cost of fuel from site to residential. Keep and maintain track of tools. Plant, water, weed harvest foods.

There are federal grants available from the federal government that enable nonprofits, families and other groups to get monies to build gardens, (grow indoors in a) hoop houses, prepare site for hoop house, get materials to build, get technical advice, get assistance to fix waterways, to obtain fencing, the list is endless.

As odd as this may sound, you can use goats to mow lawns. Save on salaried labor by doing it, save fuel from running these mowing machines and transport machines to site. (and as a perk goats can eat all the grass they want) Machines break down, need to be repaired or replaced, another preventable cost. Staff and clients can handle/supervise/transport animals. No free rides for animals either. Everyone works in Connecticut. DOA's horses, donkeys and mules can pull materials or harvested items (or workers) in wagons to storage/sorting/cleaning areas. INTERGRATE the various departments, actions for a common goal. Monies saved can create new jobs, fund other programs (childcare, museums, Old New Gate Prison and libraries, open space, beaches, etc.)

Put the training back in rehabilitation. Have maintenance staff work with clients, inmates to repair, paint, waterproof, create (wood, foam, recycled goods blacksmithing) things needed for the historical sites (old new gate prison), libraries, farms, produce This can be done off site and transported and set up onsite, or it can all be done onsite like a true construction project.. When your part of the solution you usually aren't part of the problem any longer. Their residential staff can supervise them to prevent accidents. Setup recycling areas-job training to dis-assemble, sort, record parts for reuse, or to send to scrap. You will find many creative people in the system who can utilize parts to make something useful.

Its time for all of Connecticut to pull together. I know many non-profits would do their part in assisting to get things up and running, help with the planning, finding supplies at low cost, even grant writing. Then the staff of each facility can either run, program, activity alone or in conjunction with nonprofit staff .Its time for a change in thinking, a change in planning, a change in implementing to save all of the good things that Connecticut has to offer.

• I realize we have contracts for many things we put out for bid to the public, I realize the unions of various factions will be rumbling at some and "related duties" expectations but if Connecticut is to make it not, now and into the future I believe its not just what cuts are made, what is lost or taken away but how we run the state, one that is to be the most efficient, practical and foresightful..a success as a state ,a model for others to follow.

Thank you for you time  
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M Hope Fish <mhfish@hotmail.com>  
Tuesday, April 21, 2015 12:52 PM  
AppTestimony  
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Community Investment Act :Deficiency Bill

Dear Legislators,

I am writing in opposition to Section 5 of HB 6825. It is part of the Governor's Deficiency Bill. It proposes an immediate sweep of 15.2 million from the Community Investment Act (CIA). The damage from this sweep proposed would be magnified by the current Governor's Budget proposal SB946 Section 29 (b) which proposes a complete sweep of all CIA funds from Jan. 1, 2016 through the end of the annual budget cycle on June 30, 2017.

The CIA has been an immensely successful legislation. Congratulations! It is exceeding all expectations. It has funded 1,100 projects in 168 towns for a total of 133 million given back to Connecticut. It has benefited rural, suburban and urban areas by stimulating the local economies. It has created jobs, investments, affordable housing. It has brought families and communities together. This is a very attractive asset to any state wanting to attract businesses and people. A high quality of life.

The programs created have protected open spaces, an asset we will see being invaluable in the very near future. A person's lifetime is usually filled with goals, business and personal. As one ages from youth to adult, one utilizes open spaces, parks, beaches for a multitude of reasons. A place to discover wildlife, flowers, natural formations, historical locations and their importance in our country's history. It's a stimulating environment...a walk...a run, a bike or hike challenges for personal health or an avenue to enable you to find a truly quiet spot. A Connecticut place in time. A place to reflect, to meditate, to recharge, to photograph the vanishing species. To play the flute and listen to birds and ask "who are you?". In this frenzied social society full of doubt, fear, and violence it is a true blessing to have a moment, a place such as this.

There are programs the CIA has funded to preserve historical areas so all can learn, appreciate and be proud of our heritage. Jobs are created to insure these locations are ready for the public. The family farms creating jobs, teaching people, families in the community about the need for living and eating healthy. The urban projects, fought for so vigorously, bringing a new life and source of pride and good health to families.

These are citizens. Participants in Connecticut's economy. They fund other city and state programs thru their taxes, thru their consumption of goods and services. When a community is healthy and happy, it thrives. When the communities thrive, the state is strong.

I understand these are difficult times, with hard decisions to be made. Please, examine all the benefits of keeping CIA intact and running, thriving as it is now. It has given Connecticut an elevated status amongst its peers.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak,

Sincerely,

M Hope Fish

Plainville, CT.06062-3311

Sent from Windows Mail