



Appropriations Committee Public Hearing on the DOL Budget – 2/10/16

Testimony from Alyssa Goduti

CT Council of Family Service Agencies

PLEASE DO NOT SHRED THE SAFETY NET

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is David Fowler. I live in Cheshire, CT with my girlfriend and partner of 12 years and our three and one half year old daughter. We referred to the Safety Net program by a worker at the Waterbury DSS office after our benefits had ended and we were no longer eligible for any further cash assistance. We had been participating in the Jobs First program, which was trying to help us find full time employment and providing income.

We started as clients in June of this year. The initial appointment and all others took place at our home, which was very convenient for us, as we currently do not have a car and transportation can be an issue. At this point, our needs were assessed and together we came up with an outline for a plan to become financially stable, which was our goal. All the benefits that were available to us through Safety Net and Catholic Charities were discussed with us and we found that they were able to help us in several ways.

The biggest and most helpful portion of the program for us was the rental assistance. Our cash assistance through Jobs First and DSS were our only source of income, and when they ended we had no way to pay our rent or any of our bills. The rental assistance allowed us to not just keep a roof over our heads, but the same roof in a town we know and love. We are very grateful for the months that were covered and can only imagine how much this kind of assistance could help others in need. The program can give someone the time they need to find a job and get their lives together.

Our worker, Joe Stanley, was very kind and nice to work with. We felt that he really cared about our problems and wanted to help us. He asked questions and tried to come up with ideas to help us that we hadn't thought of before. He was great with our daughter and was pleasant to deal with. He even went out of his way to find us a food voucher during a week when we needed it. It is our feeling that he will help many during his career.

While I still cannot say that I am financially stable, the program was a great help to us. I know that it can and does help others. My family and others would be much worse off without the help of this program and others like it. A helping hand in a time of need can change a person's life forever. I am very appreciative of what we received and am hopeful that others will continue to

receive it in the future. I would ask that anyone who has the opportunity to help this program continue, please do so.

Sincerely,

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