

**Testimony in Opposition to H.B. No. 5044, An Act Making Adjustments To State
Expenditures For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017**

Henry Green

Teen Outreach Program Facilitator of Family Centered Services of CT

I'm grateful for the chance to speak on the matter of S.B.1135.

My name is Henry Green and I am a facilitator for the Teen Outreach Program for Family Centered Services of CT. I teach and work with students at three out of four schools that we service in the New Haven, Bridgeport and West Haven area. I meet with these teens at least twice a week from September to June and teach a curriculum with important topics such as wise decision making, healthy relationships, goal setting and community involvement with an emphasis on teen pregnancy prevention. I also provide them with opportunities so serve in their communities through community service learning.

All three of the schools that I work with are in one of the top thirteen towns with significantly higher percentages of births to teen mothers than the statewide average. These areas have the highest need for teen pregnancy prevention programs.

However, of the teens participating in the TPPI, only .68%-1.01% became pregnant, compared to the state average of 5.5%. This is also drastically less than the town averages where we serve students, who can reach averages of over %19!

Additionally, from the most recent available data, 100% of the high school seniors who participated in our program have graduated from High School. It is evident that this program is effective and playing a vital role in the positive development of our youth today.

Not only is the program making a dramatic difference in the schools and lives of the participating teens, but on the community as well. The purpose of this bill is to save money. However, the long term financial effects of teen dropouts and/or pregnancies far outweigh the benefits of shutting down the program considering the culminated cost of health insurance, welfare, and likely criminal activity from teens, juxtaposed with the small cost of 2254\$ per student a year. Surely, the distinguished and intelligent leaders of our state can see both the financial and socioeconomic merit of this investment.

If money is the major concern, then this must not be overlooked as a long term strategy to improve upon the economic well-being of our state and the future of our nation as a whole. We are, after all, planning for a better future. This is where the future starts. We cannot hope to save more apples by watering the roots of our apple tree less.

Thank you,

Henry Green

Facilitator for Teen Outreach Program at Family Centered Services of CT

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