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To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter, as a board member of **Pathways/Senderos**, in response/opposition to the Governor's budget request to eliminate all state funding for programs dealing with teen pregnancy prevention. While I understand and appreciate the need to get our state's spending in check, as it has been pointed at as the contributing factor that drove General Electric's most recent decision to move their world headquarters to another state, and is rumored to be a factor in whether or not Aetna continues to reconfigure its stay here, I believe this budgetary decision to be short sighted, at best.

We have all heard the proverb, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime." While the origins of this proverb may be contested, the wisdom of its usefulness is not! In fact, you might say this proverb, as it applies to our program (**Pathways Senderos**, of New Britain, CT) doesn't go far enough. Our program, which has been in existence for 22 years, has had much success in addressing problems that have existed for generations within our community's most vulnerable and poor. Not only have we effectively eliminated teenage pregnancies over the last 23 years ("only 3 of our participants have created a pregnancy in this time frame – 0 pregnancies since 2006), but equally as important:

- 95 % of **Pathways/Senderos'** graduates are currently employed
- 77% of **Pathways/Senderos'** graduates continue on to some form of higher education
- 27% of participants who go on to higher education have graduated or received a certification
- 5% of our graduates have earned their Master's or Ph.D

**Pathways/Senderos** has been a story of success and should not be 'rewarded' with a 'Termination Notice'. Programs that serve the greater good of our community and state should not be viewed as just another line item in the budget, rather as an investment in our state's future.

Respectfully,

Richard Byer  
Pathways/Senderos Board Member

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