

CT COMMUNITY NONPROFIT ALLIANCE



To: Members of the Appropriations Committee

**From: Jeffrey Shaw, Director of Public Policy
CT Community Nonprofit Alliance**

Re: Appropriations Committee Public Hearing on H.B. 5044 AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO STATE EXPENDATURES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2017.

Date: February 16, 2016

Good evening distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Jeffrey Shaw and I am the Director of Public Policy at CT Community Nonprofit Alliance. The CT Nonprofit Alliance represents more than 550 community nonprofit organizations and associations across the state and is the largest advocacy organization representing community nonprofits in Connecticut. **Together, our members serve more than 500,000 Connecticut residents each year.**

I am here today to voice concerns about the Governor's 2017 Midterm Budget.

This proposed budget threatens the health and well-being of Connecticut residents by cutting spending in every area in which nonprofits serve our communities. In total, the Governor has proposed cutting vital programs and services by over \$408 million. Put another way, 72% of the total cuts proposed by the Governor will fall on state agencies that support community nonprofits.

Of particular concern, the Governor proposed eliminating an increase of \$8.5 million for private providers (in OPM), which the legislature fought to protect in budget negotiations last year. This increase – current law – recognizes the chronic underfunding that has plagued the human services delivery system for years. Additionally, the line item consolidations in both the Office of Early Childhood and the Department of Education subject important programs (such as Care4Kids, After School programs, and many others) to a 5.75% cut with no guarantee that the reduction will be evenly distributed in the (new) Agency Operations Fund. This lack of transparency and uncertainty is deeply troubling because providers and individuals who benefit from services would have no way of knowing what level of funding would be allocated and/or what programs would be prioritized. Finally, the Governor's Proposed Budget transfers Arts and Culture funding in the Department of Education (as well as many other state agencies)– at a 25% reduced level – under 'miscellaneous accounts' within the Office of the State Comptroller. While the rationale for such a transition is unclear, it is extremely clear that the sector will lose the extremely necessary prioritization the sector deserves.

Connecticut's community nonprofits deliver the state's core services, yet they are forced to operate on limited funding, the result of repeated rescissions and chronic underfunding. Doing more with less is not an option.

The individuals served by community nonprofits are some of the state's most needy citizens, and in many instances, those who strive every day to increase or regain their independence. **The services they**

receive are life sustaining. They are our children and parents, our neighbors and friends. Without community services, they will have no place to go to meet their needs, or they may be forced to more costly alternatives, such as emergency departments, hospitals—even jails.

In the past, the legislature has proven that it takes the needs and well-being of Connecticut residents seriously. **Please continue to support community nonprofits and the hundreds of thousands of individuals, children and families they serve across Connecticut.**

Thank you.

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