

Testimony to Appropriations Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly

RE: February 18 DHMAS testimony-Regional Action Councils

My name is Doug Cutler and I am the Project Director the Putnam PRIDE (Partnership to Reduce the Influence of Drugs for Everyone), a Drug Free Communities Grant Program Recipient. I have worked with Northeast Communities Against Substance Abuse (NECASA), the Regional Action Council that services the Northeast Connecticut region, for many years and would like to highlight how this organization has helped the Town of Putnam and more particularly, our Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, Putnam PRIDE.

NECASA was instrumental in providing the impetus for the Town of Putnam to obtain our federally funded DFC Grant. Without the help of Bob Brex, and his knowledge of the federal grants available to communities like Putnam, we would have not been able to successfully obtain our current DFC funded coalition. In addition to our DFC Grant, NECASA also provided invaluable advice on helping Putnam to obtain two subsequent federal grants dealing with substance abuse prevention; a STOP ACT and Mentoring Grant.

Over the past several years NECASA has provided Putnam PRIDE with many additional benefits. When PRIDE was tasked with providing the schools with a health fair, NECASA stepped in to assist with the planning and recruitment of health providers that were needed to complete the task, even assuming a key role as an instructor for one of the health fair stations.

NECASA has provided many outside resources for PRIDE assisting us with trainers. In particular Bob Brex has brought State Police Drug Trends Trainings to Putnam. We continue to utilize this training once a year to provide our law enforcement, school personnel and community leaders with up to date information on the current drugs being used by youth and adults in the state.

In the past few years our Coalition has had the opportunity to provide TIPs Training to alcohol servers in the community. NECASA has been a valuable resource in locating the most experienced trainers for these sessions.

NECASA, acting as the Regional Action Council disperses funds for the Local Prevention Council and has provided many thousands of dollars for an after school program, our local SADD organization and other events.

NECASA has also provided technical assistance with reports to both state and federal government agencies; helped with developing our School Survey Instrument and evaluation process.

Northeastern Connecticut benefits from having NECASA here to help us and to leverage funding for needed prevention services. I ask that the Appropriations Committee keep the Regional Action Councils as vibrant and appropriately funded in the FY 16-17 budget.