

Testimony of Joy E. Cangelosi, CPA
Member of S.M.A.R.T., Inc. Southbury & Middlebury Acting Responsibly Together and Member of
the Local Prevention Council of Southbury and Middlebury, Connecticut

H.B. No. 5044 AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO STATE EXPENDITURES FOR THE FISCAL
YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2017.

Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services- Regional Action Council Funding
February 18, 2016 Appropriations Subcommittee on Health Public Hearing

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Gerratana and Representative Dillon, my name is Joy Cangelosi and I am a member of the above mentioned organizations of Southbury and Middlebury, Connecticut. I am writing today to strongly oppose the grave cuts to regional action councils that will decimate the current prevention network structure.

I am a new volunteer to these organizations (joining 6 months ago) and was immediately impressed by the degree of the dedication and the passion of the efforts given by its members to combat the serious addictions facing our community. The Executive Director of the Central Naugatuck Valley Regional Action Council has provided invaluable information and guidance to S.M.A.R.T., Inc. and our Local Prevention Council to focus our efforts towards positive and effective outcomes.

Funding for our efforts is provided primarily by the Central Naugatuck Valley Regional Action Council and the Department of Mental Health Addition Services; if our regional action council were to cease to exist as a result of the funding cuts, most of our community prevention efforts would also cease to exist. I provide, as follows, a *long* list of these efforts which make a tremendous positive impact on our community:

S.M.A.R.T., Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening individuals, families, and communities. S.M.A.R.T., Inc. has three areas of focus: the Local Prevention Council (LPC), the Parent University, and participating in Family, School and Community Events. Our funding has been used to provide the following types of activities:

- Parents Who Host Lose the Most
- Anti-Smoking campaign
- Be SMART, Don't SMART campaign -to bring awareness of destructive behaviors to students in our high school via a creative thought process. We plan on expanding this campaign to our middle schools.
- Chris Herren Speaking Engagement
- Challenge 28-drug/alcohol free contract for our high school students
- Parent Drug Education Night at the high school
- Parent Survival Guide Panel Discussion
- A Guide to the Prevention of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs – Community of Concern booklet mailed to families of students in our community and available in various town facilities.
- Speaking engagements/workshops at the middle school and high school regarding various mental health issues such as bullying and suicide.
- Ed Gerety - a motivational speaker for the high school
- Workshops for high school and middle school faculty to address various mental health issues facing students.

Our funding has also allowed us to purchase several breathalyzer devices for use at high school events and to cover the fees necessary for a local privately-owned pharmacy to carry Narcan.

The Parent University portion of S.M.A.R.T., Inc. provides a series of free workshops scheduled throughout the academic year. These workshops are designed to teach parents, caregivers and people in positions of influence about various parenting-based topics that focus on prevention, education, and intervention. The goal of these workshops is to strengthen families and build assets in our elementary-aged through college-aged youth.

Parent University has offered the following Parenting workshops:

- Masked vs. Unmasked, Helping Your Children Empower themselves to have Healthy Relationships
- Parenting for Your Child's Success
- Uncovering Your Child's Natural Gifts: A Strengths-Based Approach to ADHD
- Self Destructive Behaviors Teenagers Engage In: What to look for and how to help your teen
- Why Do My Child & I Battle Over Homework (And who will win the war?)
- Happy Parents = Happy Children
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
- Parents: You Matter. Drugs/Alcohol, Your Teen and You
- Adolescent Substance Use, Abuse and Addiction
- Community Conversation - Wanting the Best for Our Youth
- Race to Nowhere: A Documentary Film on our current Educational System
- "Girls Night Out": A film and discussion on how to Raise Confident and Successful Women

Our organization also facilitates, sponsors, collaborates with, and/or disseminates information to encourage and enable individuals and families to participate in enriching, wholesome cultural activities and opportunities in the community or schools.

S.M.A.R.T., Inc. has been involved with the following events:

- Southbury Celebration
- Southbury Volunteer Fair
- NAMES program - a tolerance and diversity program for the high school
- Southbury 10K and Wellness Fair
- Southbury Turkey Trot

We urge you to reject the severe budget cuts to regional action councils and keep in place the current CT Prevention Network structure. Why break what works?!

Thank you for your careful consideration.
Joy E. Cangelosi, CPA