BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF STAMFORD

Boys & Girls Club of Stamford, Inc.

The Mary C. Rich Clubhouse
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Stamford, CT 06902

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February 17, 2017

Legislative Committee:

As the Executive Director of the Stamford Boys & Girls Club and the President of the Board for the Connecticut Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs in Connecticut, I am here to encourage you to put the Neighborhood Youth Center's line item back in the budget at its original $1.2 million.

With 16 Boys & Girls Club organizations covering 39 cities and reaching over 50,000 children each year, the valuable resources and support received from our services is vital to our very needy population. Because Clubs are located in most major cities – including Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport, Waterbury, New Britain, Stamford, Bristol, and New London, to name a few – we have the ability to reach children and families on a daily basis. Because of our building-centered locations, professional staff, high quality programs, and affordable services we are accessible to children who need us most.

Daily activities include homework help, tutoring, computer programs, academic enrichment activities, sports, healthy living, social recreation, character and leadership development, along with a wide range of local initiatives.

The Clubs teach children about sportsmanship, citizenship and how to win and lose. Children learn to get along with each other no matter what their background is or where they came from.

Clubs are safe from violence, verbal abuse and bullying, and gang activity. Children can be themselves and, most of all, have fun.

Without this funding many of these programs will either decrease or be eliminated. Working parents will be forced to leave children home alone, and children will have to make unsupportive decisions in the streets.

Thank you for your consideration of providing the necessary funding.

Dr. Michael J. Cotela
Executive Director
Stamford Boys & Girls Club

President, Board of Directors
Connecticut Alliance