H.B. 7148 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNium ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2021,
AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFORE
02/27/2018
Brooke Kokus, PA-C

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Brooke Kokus, PA-C and I am a registered voter in West Hartford. I am writing today in my role as a Physician Assistant in a Hartford School Based Health Center.

I am writing to testify on the Governor’s proposed biennial budget. I am especially concerned about yet another proposed cut of almost $200,000 to the School Based Health Clinics line item in the Department of Public Health (DPH) budget.

We provide the most cost effective efficient care to children in our community. One example of an 8 year old with asthma I am taking care of today. He has been hospitalized multiple times in the past for his asthma. He is new to our community and to school based health centers. His mother was relieved to learn that she did not have to leave her job and risk being fired to come take her son to the Emergency Department, a visit which would result in thousands of dollars of charges. I have been able to initiate nebulizer treatments and administer steroids for a fraction of the cost to the state. He will not miss school today, he will not cost the state thousands of dollars. His mother does not risk losing employment. Because I am able to initiate prompt treatment, I can prevent his asthma from worsening and decrease the risk of him being admitted to the hospital.

Another example is of a 9 year old who’s mother called asking if she needed to take her daughter to the Emergency Department for an ear ache. She was so relieved that I was able to care for her here. Again, preventing unneeded charges to the state and keeping another child in school.

These are just two examples of children I have cared for today. Every day I keep kids in school and out of the Emergency Department. We are here to serve the community, keep kids in school, keep parents working and decrease expenses for the state. Every dollar spent on a School Based Health Center provides exponential savings.

I urge you to protect the health and wellbeing of our youngest CT residents by supporting the essential and core services that School Based Health Centers provide. Please maintain funding for SBHCs in our state so that young people can continue to thrive and stay in school. This is critical to their future and to the future of our state.

Thank you for supporting School Based Health Centers

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