Testimony before the Appropriations Committee
On Governor’s proposed Biennial Budget FY2020-21

H.B. 7148 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2021, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR
February 28, 2019
TESTIMONY OF
Jennifer Newman, RN, BSN
HARTFORD SCHOOL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Good evening Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Jennifer Newman. I am a registered voter in West Hartford, CT. I am writing today in my role as a school nurse in Harford Public Schools for 13 years.

I am submitting testimony 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.

As a school nurse in two schools without a SBHC, I rely on the district SBHCs for many things. Because many of our students do not have a Primary Care Provider (PCP), it is difficult to meet the State of Connecticut requirements for school entry. The SBHCs are essential and provide the state mandated physicals and immunizations at Kindergarten, 6th grade and 10th grade free of charge for any student in the school district.

School Based Health Centers (SBHCs) are an effective, integrated and cost-effective way to help young people with their health challenges – where they spend most of their waking hours during the week – in schools. SBHCs also contribute to reducing absenteeism and improving graduation rates for youth. The School Based Health Centers (SBHCs) in the Hartford Public schools have been invaluable to our students.
In Hartford we have many students who are refugees from war torn countries who need vaccinations, physicals, dental care and mental health care. These services are all provided by the SBHC. Every child deserves a chance to be healthy and to reach their full potential in life.

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. We want young people in CT to be healthy and thriving!

Thank you for supporting School Based Health Centers!