H.B. 7148 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR 
THE BIENNium ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2021, AND MAKING 
APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.

Appropriations Committee
March 6, 2019

I am writing this testimony in support of H.B. 7148 that provides funding of the Neighborhood Youth Center Grant. The Boys & Girls Club of New Britain is a member of the Connecticut Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs (the Alliance) and it is through the Alliance that Neighborhood Youth Center Funding is made available to our Boys & Girls Club.

The Alliance consists of fifteen organizations serving 86,000 young people in twenty-two towns and cities across thirty-two Club sites in Connecticut. Boys and Girls Clubs provide a safe haven that has programs that supplement the school day by providing afterschool educational and recreational opportunities.

Clubs in Connecticut receive funding through the Neighborhood Youth Center Grant and use that funding to implement four programs designed to improve academic success, develop healthy lifestyles and build good character and citizenship in our members. These programs and others like them enable our clubs to extend and reinforce what is being taught in school.

In New Britain, these services are critical. With the majority of our members coming from low-income households, this crucial supplemental support in a safe supportive environment is invaluable.

The Connecticut Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs is a strong partner in the effort to close the achievement gap for so many young people who attend our clubs. Clubs have a very real impact on a young person's life during the critical out of school time. The state of Connecticut has been a great partner in the collective effort to bring opportunities to those children who are challenged by the achievement gap.

The Alliance is a statewide entity with the ability to adapt our collective services to the needs of the state and is the optimum partner to provide these critical out of school time services. Please consider supporting Neighborhood Youth Center funding and let's continue in this work together providing “Great Futures” for the children who need us most in Connecticut.