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 the Lower Naugatuck Valley is a member of the Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs in Connecticut 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.

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 persons 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 lets continue in this work together providing “Great Futures” for the children who need us most in Connecticut.

More than 950 members of the Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley utilized our Power Hour: Making Minutes Count homework program. Among our teenaged members, 100% of high school seniors graduated this year, and 100% of those graduates moved on to higher education.

More than 25 of our members were involved in planning, implementing, and/or participating in community service projects, allowing them to acquire skills in leadership and decision making while contributing to their communities.

More than 350 members participated in gang prevention or substance abuse prevention programs and activities. More than 1,050 members participated in the Triple Play Daily Challenge program.