Good evening, I’m Rimsha Asif, a sophomore and a Student Support Services student, also known as SSS attending the UConn Hartford Campus. As a first generation student attending college, I felt nervous of what the college experience would be like. Through the SSS pre-college program I became prepared and it helped me build my confidence and create relationships with my new community. Thus, I was able to finish my first year of college with being apart of the Dean's List. Education is tremendously important to me and I desire to earn an accounting degree. SSS has been my stepping stone in becoming a determined and passionate student who aspires to graduate from the UConn School of Business.

SSS gave me a wonderful pre-college experience which shaped me into a independent woman who is now the leader and Co-founder of UConn Human Rights Club. Through SSS I was able to earn six college credits before starting my fall semester which helped ease the burden of my study, and I was able to participate in club activities and be apart of The UConn Hartford Undergraduate Student Government. The Hartford Campus gave me amazing opportunities for club involvement activities which helped enhance my leadership skills and knowledge. Programs like SSS grant students with opportunities that open doors to success which is made possible through funding from the State. SSS allowed me to be apart of the UConn nation and because of SSS I have been given the chance to speak here today. By reducing our funds then programs like SSS will not be able to offer opportunities such as SSS study abroad which gives the students potential for increasing GPA, self-confidence and employability. Cutting our funds will limit the opportunities that are offered to students like myself.

Additionally, if funds to the University are limited then I am afraid that the university has no choice but to increase our tuition and fees, which would result in a decline in enrollment and retention. For example, if cuts lead to fewer acceptance into UConn then as a society we waste talent that can benefit our labor force and our society as a whole. After all, soon our successes will be in the hands of students who will contribute to our economy once we achieve our education. The proposed budget cuts will discourage students from seeking advanced educational opportunities. I strongly believe that education is the key factor for us to get out from any possible future recession and bring prosperity in our community.

I am so fortunate to be part of the UConn Hartford Campus. It has given me opportunities which have helped me develop not only as a student, but as a person. I am committed to seeing that other students have the same opportunities, and I hope you are too!

Thank you for your time and giving me an opportunity to speak here tonight.