

Senator Fonfara, Representative Rojas and members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today.

- I am opposed to S.B 1137, An Act Concerning Deposits in Lieu of Taxes.
- Requiring our the Darien Community YMCA to pay a tax to the State Treasurer would obviously have a very significant impact on the ability of Connecticut's YMCAs to continue to strengthen our communities.
- In 2018, the 21 Connecticut Ys, which also includes 36 branches and over 175 program sites, distributed \$11 million in financial assistance and during the past five years our Ys have distributed over \$60 million to families in aid.
- Financial assistance allows families across Connecticut to send their children to a quality early childhood program and after school program. It allows adults to improve their health by participating in our Diabetes Prevention Program and our Cancer Survivorship programs. Individuals are provided with housing. Children are able to learn how to swim and attend summer camp.
- I would also share with the members of the Committee that we employ almost 8,000 Connecticut residents and over 500,000 Connecticut residents have participated or attended a Y program or event in Connecticut.
- Our ability to provide financial assistance, continue to employ thousands of Connecticut residents, and serve our local community will be directly impacted by this proposal. Many difficult financial decisions will need to be made by local Ys if this provision is accepted by the Connecticut General Assembly.
- In 2018, the Darien YMCA provided financial assistance to 178 children to attend our summer camp program whose families could not afford to send them otherwise. We provided over 40 different special needs programs to the community, helping both children and adults develop physical and social skills in a safe and caring environment. We provided a free 12 week cancer rehabilitation program for over 25 cancer survivors. These are just a few of our programs that demonstrate our ability to help strengthen our community.

Jennifer Gardner
CEO
Darien YMCA