

Mykah Knight
Connecticut Citizen Action Group

HB 6187 An Act Concerning the Restructuring of Certain Taxes and Equity
SB 821 An Act Concerning the Reformation of Certain Taxes and Tax Equity

Good afternoon Senator Fonfara, Representative Scanlon, Senator Martin, Representative Cheeseman, and the distinguished members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee. My name is Mykah Knight, I live in West Haven, I am with the Connecticut Citizen Action Group and a member of the Recovery for All coalition. I am testifying in strong support of HB 6187 and SB 821. This year has been a painful struggle for so many Connecticut families. The COVID pandemic has further exposed and exacerbated Connecticut's deep economic disparities and pushed many to the brink of desperation. The scale of this crisis demands a bold response—people are suffering and our state has a responsibility to meet our needs.

The Covid pandemic has had a major impact on the Education that my family and I receive, more generally the urban school districts of Connecticut. This pandemic has limited our overall access to education resources. An example of this is the quality of education that I receive from my university as well as the increase of tuition that was implemented in this past year. I would also like to point out that my little brother's school district did not have the funds to provide my sibling with reasonable access to his educational materials. This included lunches, laptops, homework, and many other things. Unfortunately, the lack of school resources and high demand of educational funding has been a major problem throughout multiple urban neighborhoods in Connecticut such as New haven, Hartford, Waterbury, and many more. All of this was an issue prior to Covid however the pandemic has exacerbated the issue tremendously in the past year. I believe that this pandemic has highlighted these inquiries to a point where they are intolerable and now we must take the opportunity to change this moving forward. An increased investment into Education in urban/minority communities would benefit the parents, children, and teachers from these communities. It will allow children to have equal access to opportunities compared to other suburban school districts. It will overall improve the education quality in these school districts and it will also push families and teachers from these communities to work harder in their districts to make sure that everyone benefits from it. This investment can alter the statistics of low performing students of color to high performing students. This investment into these communities can teach students and families that they deserve an equitable amount of resources which will push their overall drive towards pursuing their education. The state needs progressive revenue in order for us to be a leading example to all states across the nation. We need to ask extremely wealthy individuals to contribute so that everyone has their fair share of resources, especially with education. Our country is the land of opportunity and freedom. What better way to live up to our country's name by progressively investing in our urban communities educational resources. Please be the face of change!

We have an unprecedented opportunity to stop the hurt so many families are feeling by funding essential services, reducing economic and racial inequality, and setting our state on a path to robust economic recovery by restoring fairness to our tax code, I urge the Committee to have the courage to make the right choice and pass HB 6187 and SB 821. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.