



**Testimony in Support of  
Raised H.B. No. 6841  
An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Universal Basic Income Pilot Program**  
Committee on Children  
February 13, 2025

**Connecticut Urban Opportunity Collaborative**

*A partnership among:  
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving  
The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven  
Fairfield County's Community Foundation*

Senator Maher, Representative Paris, Senator Martin, Representative Dauphinais and esteemed members of the Committee on Children, the Connecticut Urban Opportunity Collaborative is grateful for this opportunity to submit written testimony in support of H.B. No. 6841 An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Universal Basic Income Pilot Program.

The Connecticut Urban Opportunity Collaborative (CUOC) is a partnership among the [Hartford Foundation for Public Giving](#), The [Community Foundation for Greater New Haven](#), and [Fairfield County's Community Foundation](#). Together, CUOC is dedicated to advancing equity and promoting social and economic mobility in communities across the state.

In 2024, CUOC invested in [UpTogether](#) to launch a multi-regional Direct Cash Pilot Program to promote social and economic mobility while studying the impact of direct cash assistance in Connecticut. The program supports 120 leaders from New Haven, Hartford, and Bridgeport who are facing economic hardship and collaborating to build community power and improve their lives and neighborhoods. Over three years, participant households will receive monthly payments totaling \$12,600 to help alleviate financial challenges and foster community improvements.

A growing body of evidence from hundreds of direct cash programs operating across the country demonstrates that direct cash can lead to increased food security, improved health, more stable employment and housing, and increased family incomes and savings. Most often, funds help pay for basic needs, utilities, and rent, but can also be used for paying off debt or building emergency savings, investing in education or a business, and paying for school supplies. Recognizing and trusting in people's strengths, abilities, and self-determination also lightens the administrative burden of operating public support programs, making the use of taxpayer dollars more effective and efficient.

We support this legislation to study the impact of direct cash assistance for families across five Connecticut municipalities. Currently, three privately funded direct cash programs are operating in the state: UpTogether's pilot, The [Bridge Project's](#) pilot, and [4-CT](#), collectively benefiting over 700 households. A state-led pilot would contribute to the growing evidence of the positive impacts of direct cash assistance and offer valuable insights for effective program implementation.

We urge the Committee to consider the following as it deliberates this bill:

- While Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) and Universal Basic Income (UBI) are often used interchangeably, it is important to note the distinction between the two. GBI provides targeted financial support to those in need, whereas UBI offers a set income to all citizens, regardless of need. Both fall under the broader category of Direct Cash Assistance, alongside other models that address specific issues (e.g., housing assistance) or populations (e.g., Baby Bonds).
- The length of the pilot being long enough to truly support the social and economic mobility of the participants.
- The DSS study group is informed by the direct experience of people in the pilot program.
- The study draws on data and learning of the direct cash pilots that are currently operating in the state.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. This work presents an opportunity for public-private collaboration and investment. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to contact Cesar Aleman, Director of CUOC, via email at [caleman@hfpg.org](mailto:caleman@hfpg.org) or phone at (860) 272-6575.

For more details about CUOC's partner foundations, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, and Fairfield County's Community Foundation, please see the information below.

Since 1925, the [Hartford Foundation for Public Giving](#) has proudly served as the community foundation for the 29-town Greater Hartford region. Over the past two years, the Foundation has distributed more than \$100 million in grants to promote equitable opportunity for all residents in our region. As part of our strategic commitment to dismantle structural racism and improve social and economic mobility for Black and Latine residents of Greater Hartford, the Hartford Foundation seeks to work with government, nonprofit and other public-private partners to increase stable employment opportunities for adults and youth in our region facing barriers to employment. The Foundation also supports basic human needs, applying an equity lens to the systems and programs that address access to food, emergency shelter and homelessness diversion, physical and mental health care, and the digital divide.

[The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven](#), founded in 1928, is the charitable endowment for a twenty-town region in South Central Connecticut centered on New Haven. The Foundation's mission is to inspire, support, inform, listen to, and collaborate with the people and organizations of Greater New Haven to build an ever more connected, inclusive, equitable and philanthropic community. In 2023, The Foundation made grants and distributions totaling \$32.7 million. With more than 1,200 charitable funds and approximately \$750 million in total assets as of the end of 2023, The Foundation is the largest grant maker in our region, supporting hundreds of local nonprofit organizations across the full range of charitable activity in our community. The Foundation also works with and supports thousands of local donors in their efforts to build a stronger community in Greater New Haven.

[Fairfield County's Community Foundation](#) partners with our community to create a county where every person has an equitable opportunity to thrive. We serve the 23 towns and cities in Fairfield County. We work closely with organizations, nonprofits, businesses, and philanthropists to address challenges and identify opportunities to create a stronger, more vibrant region. Informed by three decades of partnering with and serving our community, we have awarded more than \$400 million in grants to nonprofits in Fairfield County and beyond.