



United Way of Connecticut  
Helping You Thrive.

### Children’s Committee

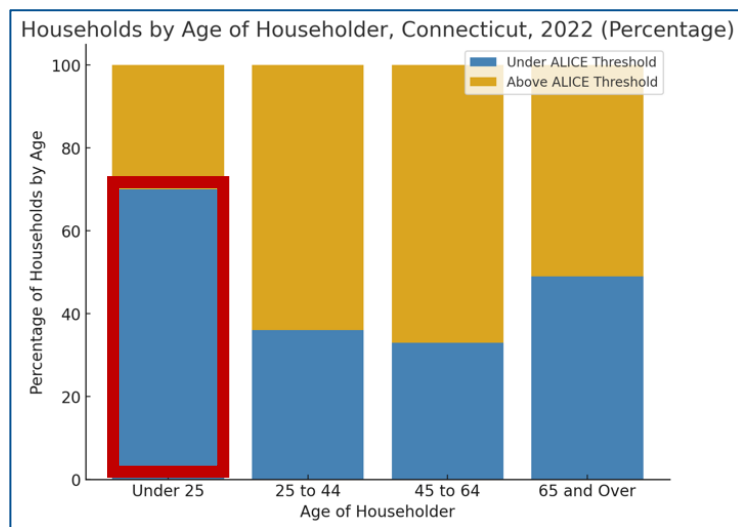
Public Hearing: March 3, 2025

### In Support of S.B. 6: An Act Concerning Resources and Supports for Infants, Toddlers and Disconnected Youths

Co-Chair Senator Paris, Co-Chair Representative Maher, Vice Chair Senator Cohen, Vice Chair Representative Welander, Ranking Member Senator Martin, Ranking Member Representative Dauphinais, and members of the Children’s Committee.

I am testifying in support of S.B. 6 on behalf of United Way of Connecticut and our mission to help all people in our state thrive through trusted partnerships and innovative solutions. Regular, up-to-date data from the Connecticut Preschool Through Twenty and Workforce Information Network is essential to tracking and reducing youth disconnection effectively.

**Young people under 25 are the most likely age group to struggle financially, with many unable to afford basic necessities.** Every young person in Connecticut deserves the freedom to build a secure future, but too many face barriers that leave them disconnected from school and work. United Way of Connecticut is a leader in the Campaign for Working CT, a statewide coalition committed to unlocking opportunity for the next generation and strengthening our state’s workforce.



Through our Campaign for Working Connecticut’s [Opportunity Youth Initiative](#), we advocate for bold policy solutions to support young people across every zip code aged 14-26 who are at-risk or already disconnected from school or work. Right now, these community organizations across the state are working tirelessly to ensure that over 7,000 young people in their programs every year stay on track.

### Data alone isn’t enough—we need action. And we know what works.

With additional state funding, **these community-based programs could immediately serve 1,000 more young people who are currently on waitlists.** Services delayed are services denied, creating unnecessary hardship for young people and communities. These programs, tailored to

local needs, provide proven pathways to success—but they need reliable public investment to scale their impact.

The recent [Young People First](#) report makes a compelling argument for why **youth-centered regional coordination will drive meaningful change**. Investing right away in a pilot initiative for this approach in two communities, modeled after successful homelessness response networks, would provide comprehensive support for 100 young people—connecting them to critical resources like childcare, housing, and career pathways and providing built-in accountability.

Additionally, **implementing the workforce solutions outlined in the [Young People First](#) report will have a rapid impact**. This includes revamping CT’s 211 system, expanding transitional employment and apprenticeship programs, supporting a state-level Child Tax Credit, and launching the Connecticut Youth Service Corps. These investments will ensure young people and their families have access to every opportunity they need to thrive.

S.B. 6 isn’t just about data—it’s about securing Connecticut’s future. When young people thrive, our communities thrive, our businesses grow, and our state’s economy becomes stronger for everyone.

**Now is the time to act.** Let’s invest in our future workforce and give every young person in Connecticut a real chance to succeed

Thank you,



**Daniel Fitzmaurice**  
Director of Advocacy