

43 Lincoln Street
New Haven, CT 06511
February 11, 2020

State Appropriations Committee
RE: BILL 5005

Dear Appropriations Committee:

Please pardon the brevity of this letter testifying to the importance of Music Haven's funding in this year's appropriations bill, time is short and I've only recently become aware that the committee is considering a cut.

I am writing to ask you to make CERTAIN to keep Music Haven's funding as part of the CT State Budget. There are so many organizations in New Haven that are considered anchor institutions which have qualified for years of support from taxpayer dollars. These arts organizations are important, but none do the extraordinary work to impact families and children in New Haven that Music Haven does.

This program impacts our young people and their families for the long haul. It is about giving kids a place to learn the amazing delight of not just attending a concert, but learning to be part of a musical community. Although access to music lesson is an important and wonderful thing, this is NOT the only thing that is important about Music Haven. Music Haven changes children, their families and their neighborhoods by making a long term commitment and building relationships.

I am a community member who is a donor, not a parent nor board member. I have seen how very special the connection is between the students, their families and the Music Haven community. I have seen how the Fair Haven neighborhood near their facility bristles with excitement as the students come and go. I have seen how the broader community has pitched in, helping to provide a beautiful new facility and solving family transportation problems.

This program creates scholars and community leaders, not "just" musicians. Please make sure that support stays in the budget. We need these novel, community-based programs to support young people to grow and thrive.

Sincerely,

Laura Berry
Bernard Hulin

