



CSH
61 Broadway
Suite 2300
New York, Y 10006
T 212-986-2966
F 212-986-6552
csh.org

**Appropriations Budget Hearing On Governor's proposed Mid-term Budget Adjustments
for FY2021**

**Department of Housing
Tuesday, February 11th, 2020**

Senator Osten, Senator Formica, Representative Walker, Representative Lavielle, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Christi Staples and I am the New England Regional Director for The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH). Thank you for hearing my testimony today on the important investments through the Department of Housing to support efforts to end homelessness in Connecticut.

CSH is a nationally recognized expert on supportive housing (SH), offering unmatched knowledge and providing unparalleled technical assistance and training on housing, services, and programs for homeless and vulnerable individuals and families. As an expert intermediary, CSH brokers strong collaborations between agencies and guides partners in program design, client targeting approaches, and best practices in creating housing, designing services, and undertaking large-scale systems change. Because we are not a membership organization, we regularly challenge the status quo among housing providers and funders alike and push for raising the bar for quality in the industry. We are proud partners in the statewide Reaching Home and Home CT campaigns to create affordable housing and prevent and end homelessness.

Homelessness is an unacceptable condition for any Connecticut resident, and an expensive public policy problem. The good news is public investments in frontline homeless services, permanent supportive housing, and support services are saving public resources and helping families and individuals transition to housing, stability, and hope – and the impact our investments are having is clear and profound: numbers of those experiencing homelessness are going down year after year. Connecticut has seen a 66% reduction in chronic homelessness since 2016.

Connecticut continues to be a leader in the nation in efforts to address the important and expensive problem of homelessness – but we still have far too many individuals, families with young children, and youth becoming homeless daily. Investment in proven solutions to homelessness are necessary to continue our progress and ensure that every youth, family, and individual has a stable place to call home.

The current budget proposal before the legislature preserves funding for critical housing and homelessness services and supports, including:

**Maintaining the Department of Housing's Housing/Homeless Services line at \$85.8 million,
and the Homeless Youth line at \$2.3 million.**

While the Governor's mid-term budget adjustments protect and preserve the Department of Housing's Housing/Homelessness Services line and Homeless Youth line, the following additional investments are necessary in making homelessness rare, brief and one time by 2023:

- **Create a stable funding stream for the Coordinated Access Networks (CANs) 2-1-1 by providing \$2.3 million annually to the Department of Housing's Housing/Homeless Services line.**
- **An investment of \$1.47 million in the Department of Housing's Housing/Homeless Services**
- **Add \$1 million each for rental assistance and services to provide stable housing and services for highly vulnerable people experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.**

We urge the legislature and the Governor to work together to preserve these critically needed resources, so that we can complete the job of ending homelessness in Connecticut, once and for all. Thank you for considering my testimony and thank you for your support to efforts to end and prevent homelessness in Connecticut.

Sincerely,

Christi Staples

Christi Staples, MSW
Director, New England
CSH