

February 18, 2020

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My Name is Wendy Yagarich. I have been working at Madonna Place for 11 years. Over the last 11 years, I have slowly watched our agency shrink due to regular State Budget cuts to the non-profit sector.

Madonna Place is a nonprofit agency that helps children who are at risk of child abuse and neglect by providing strength-based center and home-based services to their families. Services are primarily based in New London County but extend to Windham and Middlesex Counties for DCF. **Our largest source of revenue is the State of Connecticut, and the combination of program eliminations, cuts, rescissions which then become base funding, and almost nonexistent COLA adjustments have negatively impacted Madonna Place and the families and communities we serve.**

The State of Connecticut budget and its revenue is the strongest it has been in a decade. It is commendable that the State has built up the Rainy Day Fund. It was certainly a positive step last year that there were fewer budget cuts to nonprofits. But that is not enough, nor is it enough to put out a highly competitive RFP incentive program that does not help program operations. **A commitment to a significant base increase is needed for all State funded grants – DSS, DCF, OEC, DMHAS, etc.**

Thank you for your consideration and support of Madonna Place, and the thousands of children, families and other individuals in our State that are served daily by the nonprofit community.

We are counting on you to take a leadership role with this issue.

Sincerely,

Wendy Yagarich