



United Services, Inc.

*Creating healthy communities*

**Appropriations Committee Public Hearing on:  
H.B. 5005 An Act Adjusting The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June 30, 2021**

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Formica, Representative Lavielle and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Diane Manning, and I am President and CEO of United Services, Inc, which is a non-profit provider of behavioral health and social services in northeastern Connecticut. United Services is the DMHAS designated Local Mental Health Authority (LMHA) for the 21 towns in the area, as well as an outpatient and community based service provider for children and families for DCF, the Domestic Violence services provider of two shelters, community and court based services for victims, the Youth Service Bureau and the Juvenile Review Board for 5 of the towns. We provide extensive services to support individuals and their families and loved ones throughout the area.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on H.B. 5005 An Act Adjusting The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June 30, 2021,

Community nonprofits provide essential services in every city and town in Connecticut, serving people in need and employing tens of thousands. They are what make Connecticut a great place to live and work.

I am here to respectfully **request that the legislature appropriate \$461 million over five years for community nonprofits**. Since 2007, we have lost at least \$461 million in state funding that has not kept pace with inflation or adequately covered increased costs and demand for services over the last thirteen years. Even while funding has remained stagnant or decreased, we responded to a more than 200% increase in demand for services. We can no longer do that without your prioritizing funding.  
Please:

1. Commit to increasing funding by the full \$461 million, or 28%, by Fiscal Year 2025;
2. Appropriate \$128 million (a state net of \$67 million after federal reimbursement) in new funding for community nonprofits in Fiscal Year 2021, a 7% increase;
3. Index increases to inflation, to ensure that state funding will keep pace with increased costs in the future.

Over the last few years our communities have been heavily impacted by the increase in Opioid addictions, and the increase in deaths. We have seen increases in deaths by suicide and suicide attempts, domestic violence incidents and deaths, and the trauma that loved ones and friends experience when these horrible incidents happen. We have responded to the needs of young children who have watched their parent die of an overdose, and supported their grandparents and siblings in their grief and trauma, and planning for the rest of their lives. We have been there for our volunteer first responders as they processed the death by suicide of one of their own. We have worked with employers and employees and families and friends as they also dealt with loss of someone from

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violence who was integral to their lives. Each time one of these incidents happen, we create a whole new set of multiple trauma victims.

We are overwhelmed by the need and hamstrung by the lack of financial support to even maintain the services we operated before the Opioid crisis added a whole new set of trauma victims. The funding we are requesting brings us only back to 2007 levels, hardly meeting need. But it is better than the support we have had for the last decade and more.

We know that there are hard decisions to make about what is important. We ask you to make a decision to support the human services infrastructure provided by community providers that has been ignored for too long. Failing to prioritize this funding will lead to more tragedy.