



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

March 26, 2021

State Senator Catherine Osten
State Representative Toni Walker
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

**RE: H.B. 5607, AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDS TO
REPLENISH THE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION TRUST FUND**

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is David Stevenson and I serve as the President & CEO for the Central Connecticut Coast YMCA. I have the privilege of leading eleven Y branches serving Bridgeport, New Haven, and the neighboring communities. Our mission includes offering quality programs and services in the core areas of youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility, and we typically serve between 80,000 to 100,000 Connecticut residents every year. We welcome all regardless of ability to pay, and approximately one-third of the youth and families coming through our doors are able to do so with financial assistance from the Y.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding H.B. 5607, An Act Concerning the Use of COVID-19 Relief Funds to Replenish the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund. As a not-for-profit organization, the Central Connecticut Coast YMCA pays for 100% of the costs of unemployment benefits paid to employees who have been laid off due to COVID-19. Federal support has resulted in a reduction of our unemployment burden by 75%. The pandemic has meant that not-for-profits have faced unexpectedly large unemployment insurance bills. By all accounts, these bills are one of the most problematic issues facing Ys statewide in 2021, because Ys laid off or furloughed 70-90 percent of their staff during the pandemic. This expense has forced our Y to eliminate programs and services, lay off more employees, and delay the rehiring of staff.

My request is that not-for-profits who serve as a lifeline for many in Connecticut be granted an additional 25% in coverage allowing not-for-profits to be fully relieved of the cost of unemployment compensation. Taking this action will allow not-for-profits, including the Central Connecticut Coast YMCA, to more fully serve our communities, especially those most in need.

Thank you for your leadership and service, and the opportunity to share my thoughts.

Sincerely,

David Stevenson, Ph.D.
President & CEO