

Dear members of the Appropriations Committee. This is part of my testimony in support of the Governor's budget which preserves and expands funding for the Homeless Youth Line item. I wanted to state that I have enjoyed the help that I have received from the Start program, which is funded through this line item. When I first entered the program, I was homeless and couch hopping during the winter months and living in my car periodically. This program allowed me to get back on my feet and feel much more positive towards a lot of aspects in my life. Granted, I took a fall due to the pandemic...that didn't stop my case worker from pushing on and keeping me focused. To that I appreciate more than they may know. My hope is that this program may continue on in the future, even after my discharge. If given the right opportunity; so many kids could grow and benefit than people may understand or comprehend. Thank you very much for your time in considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

Kyanno Berrios, Bridgeport, CT