

TESTIMONY OF SONYA MALCOLM IN SUPPORT OF CONTINUED FUNDING FOR THE CONNECTICUT FAIR HOUSING CENTER

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, and Distinguished Member of the Appropriations Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of continued funding for the Connecticut Fair Housing Center (“the Center”). My name is Sonya Malcolm, and I am a resident of Hartford, CT.

I am asking you to support the Governor’s request for funding for the Center. Until her recent passing, I lived with my mother, who relied on a wheelchair, was blind, and had on-going serious medical needs that required health aides to bring her to important appointments multiple times each week. In 2017, my landlord denied our request to give a new aide access to the parking lot serving our building, a parking lot that has many open spaces. As a result, my mom had extreme difficulty in accessing her transportation including having to wait by herself on the street while her aide brought the car around.

I wasn’t sure how to help my mom, but the Center stepped in to advocate for us with our landlord. When that failed, they represented me in filing a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. The Center helped negotiate a settlement for us, ensuring that my mom’s aides could access the parking lot and my mom would no longer be left alone while her aide searches for parking.

Because of the Center, a blind woman relying on a wheelchair no longer was left alone on the street waiting for her aide to find a parking space and walk back to her. Because of the Center, my mom had access to the transportation that she needed due to her disabilities and medical needs. I ask that you continue to fund the Connecticut Fair Housing Center so that people like my mom and I receive help when we need it.