



**Testimony submitted to the Appropriations Committee on H.B. 6439, An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June Thirtieth, 2023, and Making Appropriations Therefor**

**March 9, 2021**

Co-Chairs Senator Osten and Representative Walker, Ranking Members Senator Miner and Representative France, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Shaurice, and I'm from Bridgeport, Connecticut. I'm testifying to oppose H.B. 6439 and Governor Lamont's proposed education budget. I'm also asking you to modify the budget to align with S.B. 948, which is currently in the Education Committee.

Our children are suffering and struggling in this underfunded education system. Our kids aren't afforded the same opportunities as children in other parts of CT because of low funding. Right now our athletes don't have any programs or games to look forward to. We need funding to keep our children's attention, make up the losses due to the pandemic, and ensure our children are ready for college and beyond.

In Bridgeport, there aren't enough options for a parent trying to choose schools that meet their child's needs. I originally thought sending my son to a magnet school was the solution, but they weren't culturally aware. The next school was culturally aware and had a new building, but I then found out that they lacked the resources to teach him properly. I started to feel like I was window shopping for my son's education. When I think about the difference between Fairfield and Bridgeport school districts, I am amazed at how extremely different they are. It is a constant reminder that our kids deserve better and their schools should be fully funded. If we were funded, we would have more STEM initiatives, better sports programs, more electives, and up-to-date teaching resources in all of our schools!

Please modify the proposed budget to reflect the values of justice and equity in education.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and leadership on this issue.

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