

Good afternoon distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Dottie Jankowski and I live in Wilton, CT and work for STAR Inc. in Norwalk, CT as an Employment Manager.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on H.B. 6439, An Act concerning the state Budget for the Biennium ending June, 2023.

Community agencies like STAR are essential in the lives of so many people in need, and offer employment to so many thousands as well.

I have been working for STAR for less than a year, having started my job during the pandemic. During this period, I have witnessed the extraordinary work that is being done to help bring care and services to people with disabilities, all while dealing with the significant concerns of the covid pandemic. The far-reaching impact of this work is felt not only for the participants, their families, friends, and care-givers but extends throughout the lives of the staff and their families, as the pandemic has created a whole new set of challenges. The agency has done its best to continue to provide outstanding ongoing services along with working to keep their participants and staff safe.

Please increase funding to the non-profit agencies so that the significant work of these programs can continue.

Thank you.