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The Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club in New London, CT

H.B. 6439 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR
THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2023, AND MAKING
APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.

Appropriations Committee
March 1, 2021

I am writing this testimony in support of H.B. 6439 that provides funding of the Neighborhood Youth Center Grant. The Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club in New London, CT is a member of the Connecticut Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs (the Alliance) and it is through the Alliance that Neighborhood Youth Center Funding is made available to our Boys & Girls Club.

The Alliance consists of Sixteen organizations serving 85,000 young people in twenty-two towns and cities across thirty-two Club sites in Connecticut. Boys and Girls Clubs provide a safe haven that has programs that supplement the school day by providing afterschool educational and recreational opportunities.

Since the pandemic we have provided not only direct youth programming to our Boys and Girls club members, but also aided with Rent/utility/food assistance to those families who have been hit hardest since the onset of the pandemic last March.

Clubs in Connecticut receive funding through the Neighborhood Youth Center Grant and use that funding to implement four programs designed to improve academic success, develop healthy lifestyles and build good character and citizenship in our members. These programs and others like them enable our clubs to extend and reinforce what is being taught in school.

The Connecticut Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs is a strong partner in the effort to close the achievement gap for so many young people who attend our clubs. Clubs have a very real impact on a young persons life during the critical out of school time. The state of Connecticut has been a great partner in the collective effort to bring opportunities to those children who are challenged by the achievement gap.

Over 60% of the children that attend Boys and Girls club, fall into families that are below the poverty line. The Boys and Girls club gives these children a chance to develop areas of STEM/Character building to give them a chance to break that cycle of poverty for themselves and build a better future for themselves and their families.

The Alliance is a statewide entity with the ability to adapt our collective services to the needs of the state and is the optimum partner to provide these critical out of

school time services. Please consider supporting Neighborhood Youth Center funding and lets continue in this work together providing "Great Futures" for the children who need us most in Connecticut.