

James M. Jones
New Britain Boys & Girls Club

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 New Britain Boys & Girls Club 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.

Our Club is hosting Remote Learners and running after-school programs for the community and essential employees. We are providing meals and Wi-Fi for children in our community and taking care of our youth's social and emotional needs.

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. Our Club is already an incredible boon to the wellbeing of children, helping them build resiliency skills they need to succeed in life. A plethora of research has demonstrated afterschool programs can pay a key role in mitigating the effects of childhood trauma.

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 let's continue in this work together providing "Great Futures" for the children who need us most in Connecticut.

In partnership!

