



Written 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 Anna-Celia Sotomayor, and I'm from Connecticut. I'm writing 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.

As the parent of three children in the Bridgeport Public Schools I am writing to you, to notify you that we are opposed to a budget plan that negatively affects Bridgeport Public Schools! Your 7 million dollar budget cut is completely unacceptable. Bridgeport public schools are and have been hurting for years, with no hope in sight. From our board members, who have displayed such a lack of professionalism, and lack of positive interest in the future of the children in our city.

I am currently employed and work for Westport Public Schools. From what I have witnessed, with my own eyes. I have seen what proper funding can do, for the future of the kids in that town. Now, to hear what's happening in my own backyard is alarming.

As a parent who had 2 children on an IEP in the Bridgeport Public School system and to deal with the budget cuts we had and still have is extremely frustrating, to see and experience. Children do not get the proper resources they need because the school's don't have what they need to follow through with the children's needs. We have already had to deal with para's being taken away from our kindergarten kids when they need the extra help. To know that decisions have to be made to make another drastic budget cut, is unacceptable and alarming. You would think a budget cut is what we need. When in reality we need MORE not less. Where is this "cut" going to? Whose pocket is it going into? if it's not going into the school then where? Our children deserve better than what they have been given!

Right now, our state's education funding system is racist and classist. We spend more on educating affluent white children than low-income children and children of color. Then we spend even more to police, prosecute, and incarcerate those who are failed by our education system. I'm asking you to help make Connecticut a more just and equitable place to live.

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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