



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 Brandon Woods. I am currently an undergraduate admissions counselor at Quinnipiac University and have served as a higher ed admissions and recruitment specialist for the New York and Connecticut Area for several years now. I am also a member of FaithActs for Education and am here to speak in opposition to HB 6439, the Governor's proposed budget.

Aside from literally working for an institution of learning, I have been raised to value my education and the opportunities that are presented to me as a result of it. I am also a Black American man who was once a Black American boy navigating the public school system in Brooklyn, New York. All of these things allow me to approach my work from an equity lens. This equity lens makes it frustrating to do my job on most days.

Some schools in urban school districts don't have the funds to host college fairs, so we never get to visit and tell students about our programs. Some schools don't have guidance counselors so interested students from that school fall behind or get lost in the college application process. As a recruiter, I get denied the opportunity to speak in these underfunded schools because data can prove that they won't qualify for our scholarships or won't get into our programs because they don't meet basic application requirements.

People can't say this isn't about money. If it wasn't about money, suburban school districts wouldn't be fighting so hard to keep their piece of the pie. I see how lack of funding equals lack of access, and what is most concerning is how our elected leaders have chosen to casually ignore this injustice but still show up to our neighborhoods asking for our vote.

I currently live in Bridgeport. It's disheartening to know that the only way my future children will have a shot at a quality education is if I pay for them to go to private school. Education should not be a privilege. Please reject HB6439 and look into supporting equitable funding for all CT students through SB 948, instead.

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

Brandon Woods
39 Park Terrace
Bridgeport CT 06604

FaithActs for Education
857 Post Road, Suite 310
Fairfield, CT 06824