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**#IAmEssential**

*Community services are essential and should be fully funded!*

Dear Representative / Senator \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Office #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Please fully fund community services in the State budget.** This year’s state budget surplus presents a rare opportunity for Connecticut to invest in essential, quality services provided by community nonprofits that help people across the state every year. ***Please appropriate $100 million of FY19 surplus dollars for community services to make up some of the ground lost after more than a decade of budget cuts***.

Community nonprofits improve our quality of life, making Connecticut a better place to live and work, but state funding has been reduced repeatedly over the past decade. At the same time, the need for services has increased. Nonprofits feed the hungry, house the homeless, support people with intellectual/developmental disabilities, treat people with mental health and substance abuse needs, and provide arts and culture that make our communities vibrant. Nonprofits also employ thousands of people in towns and cities across the state.

Community nonprofits and the people they serve should be a budget priority and they’ve already done more than their share of sacrifice during tough times. The state cut funding from nonprofits every year that there were deficits. Now, there is a surplus. If the state cannot restore some of those cuts this year, when can they be restored?

The state has a chance to make up some lost ground **-- please help nonprofits and the people who need them!**

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*Thank you,*Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Organization: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Town: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Contact Info: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_