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Public Hearing Testimony before the  
Connecticut General Assembly Appropriations Committee

Deb Polun, Executive Director  
Connecticut Association for Community Action, Inc. (CAFCA)

*In support of House Bill 5431: An Act Concerning Funding  
Received by the State Under the Federal American Rescue Plan Act*

March 18, 2022

Distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee:

Thank you for holding this public hearing to gather information from the public. The Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA) is the state association that works with Connecticut's nine Community Action Agencies (CAAs), the state and federally designated anti-poverty agencies serving nearly 200,000 low- and moderate-income people in all 169 cities and towns across the state.

As the largest statewide safety net service provider, Connecticut's network of Community Action Agencies connects neighbors in need with resources that stabilize and improve lives and communities. These services and resources include, but are not limited to:

- Nutrition (SNAP, Meals on Wheels, Congregate Meals for older adults)
- Housing and shelter
- Asset development and financial literacy
- Energy and heating assistance
- Job training
- Early childhood care and education

Through a holistic, comprehensive, multigenerational approach, CAAs work with those in need to plan, achieve, and maintain a realistic path to short and long-term economic self-sufficiency and success.

I have attached a Profile of Services table to this testimony, which shows the services provided by Community Action Agencies in Connecticut.

*House Bill 5431 – Sections 2 and 3*

Sections 2 and 3 of HB 5431 provide a fix for a Community Health Worker program the legislature created last year in Public Act 21-2, June Special Session. The language transfers jurisdiction of the program from the Department of Public Health to the Department of Social Services; clarifies language to allow for the full \$6 million appropriated to be allocated to the Community Action Agencies; and extends the end-date of the program by one year to June 30, 2024. We appreciate the inclusion of language that specifies that funds can be used both for existing Community Health Workers and those who are yet to be hired.

We are grateful for the Committee's support for this measure, as well as the opportunity for early legislation this session that includes this language. The sooner the legislation is passed, the sooner the CAAs can enhance their capacity with Community Health Workers and meet the original intent of the legislation last year.

Thank you to all of you for your consideration of this important proposal, and, as always, for your service to our state. Please feel free to get in touch with any questions: [deb@cafca.org](mailto:deb@cafca.org) or 860-832-9438.

\* Please see attachment

