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## Press Release

Short term tiny saving in state budget could cost millions in the first year.

**Covenant to Care for Children removed in Rell's budget proposal.**

As Connecticut leaders continue negotiations striving to resolve the state budget issues there is the risk of their taking steps that have both immediate and long term unintended fiscal consequences.

One such risk is found in Governor Rell's current budget proposal, the complete elimination of the Covenant to Care line item in the DCF section of the budget. (Page 35 in the Governor's proposal.) The total dollar amount of this line item is \$166,000.00 so the impact on balancing the current budget discussion is minuscule. The impact on the actual spending for the budget year and for the future is \$39,000,000.00 per year in additional costs to the State.

According to the study done a few years ago at St. Joseph's College, Covenant to Care for Children, a statewide nonprofit serving over 27,000 neglected, abused and at risk children every year, saves the state 39 million in the costs of serving these children and their families.

Between 75% and 85% percent of the work done through CCC's Adopt A Social Worker Program is preventative. Through the mobilization of thousands of volunteers and donors who offer services and goods to the children of Connecticut, Covenant to Care for Children makes it possible for families to remain intact rather, than moving into the foster care and/or the court system. The goods and services provided make it possible for families to reunite and become self-sustaining. According to the CCC audit for the 2008 fiscal year, \$714,892.00 in donated goods and services were distributed to the most vulnerable of Connecticut's children. These are

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goods and services are items the state would otherwise have had to provide through direct expenses to the state's bottom line, or in many cases would have been unable to provide resulting in the far higher costs of these children and their families being added to or extended in DCF involvement and caseload.

The most recent figures available show that Covenant to Care for Children's programs return \$6.80 on every dollar donated.

The amount of \$166,000 found in the Covenant to Care line item means the state would be spending \$6.64 per child served in the Adopt A Social Worker Program. The savings to the State per child by this small expenditure is calculated at \$1,560.00 per child

Regardless of the political fiscal values an individual or group may hold, it makes no fiscal sense to cut a program that provides such an unprecedented "Return on Investment".

"Our belief is that our legislators and our Governor all appreciate the work of Covenant to Care for Children in our 23 year relationship with DCF and the children of Connecticut." states CCC CEO, Caryl Hallberg, "The concern is that, unless Governor Rell places the Covenant to Care line item back into her proposal, our small line item amount will be forgotten and ultimately left out of the final state budget. The negative effect on Connecticut's bottom line and the children will be monumental."

Covenant to Care for Children has called on its volunteers and friends to email or call the Governor and the Connecticut legislators urging them to reinstate Covenant to Care as a line item.

To learn more about Covenant to Care for Children and their programs including the Adopt a Social Worker Program, and to take action please visit [www.covenanttocare.org](http://www.covenanttocare.org)

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