

May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Chairman Dolan and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

In December 2017, I had just finished a semester at a nearby college to get my teaching degree. I dropped out when I realized that teaching and ultimately college itself wasn't for me. I was stuck in life and didn't know what I wanted to do for a career. While I tried to figure out the career aspect of my life I got a job as a cashier. And while I did enjoy the part where I got to interact with a variety of people I wasn't happy about the job itself. As I was researching for possible career paths I had stumbled upon Assist to Succeed. I read testimonies and saw how the program changed peoples' lives for the better. I've always wanted to go into dentistry as a child but quickly dropped the idea when I thought how long the schooling must be. So when I found out how long the program was I was shocked and wanted to know more. That's when I scheduled an appointment to tour the office that the program would be working out of and continuing to hear great things overall. I then decided to commit to the program and become a dental assistant. The problem was that I couldn't come up with enough money to enroll in the program and was very distraught but thought that I could save up enough money for a couple years and then enroll. The thought of having to wait years before I could even enroll was very saddening especially since I knew becoming a dental assistant is what I truly wanted. It was shortly after finding the program that my mom mentioned that she saw a loan I could borrow for the class. And when I actually got the revolving loan and enrolled in the class I was ecstatic. I loved every second of the class and eventually graduated. I applied for dental assisting positions and became employed by Aspen Dental doing what I love to do. None of this would have been possible without Assist to Succeed or the revolving loan program that helped me pay for the class. I wouldn't have had the opportunities that I have had without the loan and am constantly grateful for the support I found through the revolving loan program and through Assist to Succeed. I beg you to please reconsider taking the funding from these programs. It is so important to others like me out there and the continued success of the dental industry.

Thank you for your time,

Shannon Rapol