



160 St. Ronan Street, New Haven, CT 06511-2390 (203) 865-0587 FAX (203) 865-4997

Testimony for H.B. No. 7155
An Act Concerning a Professional Assistance Program for Health Care
Professionals

**Medical Director, Al Herzog, MD.
Medical Director, Professional Programs, The Institute of Living**

The Honorable Co-Chairs State Senator Mary Ann Hanley and State Representative Peggy Sayers and members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is Al Herzog, MD. I come before you today to speak in strong support of H.B. No. 7155, an act concerning a Professional Assistance Program for Health Care Professionals.

I come before you today with several hats: As Chairman of the State Medical Society's Committee on Physicians Health, also as a Co-Chair of its Legislative Committee, as Medical Director of the Institute of Living's Professional Intensive Outpatient Treatment Program, as a physician who donates time to the Department of Health in the investigation of health care professionals with potential problems and finally, as a psychiatrist who treats health care professionals in need of help for the past 30-plus years.

We, by that I mean, members of the Department of Public Health and a Collaborative of Healthcare Professionals, have worked hard "behind the scenes" to come up with a bill which balances the needs of public safety with individual practitioner confidentiality. In this bill as presently written, the Department of Public Health has sufficient guarantee for public accountability and the practitioner is assured of sufficient confidentiality to make the program successful. Without such a guarantee, we could not have a program. I want to express my particular thanks to Dr. Galvin and his senior staff for working with us to achieve these important accommodations.

I ask you to give your strong support for H.B. No. 7155, both here and, I hope, in both the House and Senate. Should H.B. No. 7155 become law, Connecticut will have a Professional Assistance Program that I know other states across this country will want to copy and one of which all of us will be proud!

Thank you for your attention.