

Speech for Public Hearing LOB  
Public Health Committee  
HB-5449  
Virginia Gerena  
120 Retreat Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106  
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Good morning, Public Health Committee members. My name is Ginny Gerena. I am an Advocacy Unlimited Graduate. I'm testifying in opposition of bill SB-5449 an act concerning the Issuance of Emergency Certification by Licensed Clinical Social Workers and Advanced Practical RN's. Giving them the ability to commit individuals with psychiatric disabilities to institutions, I don't believe this would be a good act because it would give this type of staff, RN's and Social Workers the power to institutionalize individuals with psychiatric disabilities against their will.. The clinicians mentioned above don't have the same amount of training as a Doctor would. I feel this would violate the rights of a person with a psychiatric disability by forcing them to be committed against their will.

I have been both a provider and a consumer, working for many years in hospitals and other medical settings. In my mind this is the same as in the past when individuals were restrained continuously as a means of control, of course this should only be done when individuals are a threat to them selves or others. This same concept also applies as it concerns the act of commitment; only if they are a threat to themselves or others, for example in extreme cases when mandated by a physician. Likewise when I became too much consumed in my work, and became ill; I recall restrains being used, and I didn't like it, the same way as I would not like being committed against my will.. Please consider this petition and thank you very much for your undivided attention.