

**Testimony  
Public Health Committee  
House Bill 5810  
March 12, 2008**

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Good Morning Ladies and Gentleman

There is I believe a definite need for House Bill 5810

I can approach the bill from two points of view. I volunteered with Emergency Medical Services for many years and I have been on the patient side as well. Two years ago I was suicidal and entered the consumer world. Prior to that visit I was involved with AA and Alanon. I am ok now and feel that my experiences on both sides of this issue can help. Nothing is scarier than an Emergency Room that is understaffed when you enter it in crisis! When a person's mental health is the reason for the ER visit the crisis can and in most cases will quickly get worse. The worsening of the crisis adds even more chaos and confusion to an already scary situation. For a consumer to recognize an approaching crisis is huge but to have that recognition be for naught due to a lack of available support is a crime. Left to deal with the situation alone "self-medication" is the usual course taken. So instead of learning to manage one's situation with an educated and trained ER staffer the consumer turns to alcohol, medications or other substances of modern chemistry. I learned with the help of dedicated professionals that suicide is quitting. I learned from my father that alcohol is not an answer. I learned from EMS what a huge mistake overuse of medications and modern chemistry is. Pass 5810 think of the potentially added benefits; more self sufficient consumers who can add to society, a reduction in OD's, less business for dealers, a reduction in suicides and the most important reason helping people before they reach crisis!  
Thank you for your time.