

Proposed Bill No. 5230

AN ACT CONCERNING A PILOT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE HOUSING AND SERVICES FOR TRANSITIONING YOUNG ADULTS.

I want to thank the committee on Human Services, Representative Villano and Representative Walker for lifting up this Bill.

My name is Jody Wynn Rodiger of Manchester, CT and I support Bill 5230. I was raised as an advocate for food and shelter. I was trained to always think outside of the box for good innovative ways to build better communities and serve all people in need. Now I serve as a board member on MISH and MANA – Manchester Initiative for Supportive Housing and Manchester Area Network on AIDS. I also support MACC the Manchester Shelter. In the past couple of years the funding has been cut to crucial programs that support individuals and families in need.

Growing up in a family where several of my family members suffer with depression and alcoholism I learned at an early age that there must be a better way to help people with mental illness. My mother supported a college friend as she suffered with mental illness and was institutionalized. In my early years I watched my mother's sadness as she advocated for her friend to find a better way and reunite her with her daughter.

Today I have a dear wonderful friend who has nurtured, supported and stood by her son now in his mid 40's throughout his life. The up's and down's of regulating his meds, times where he disappears off the face of the planet where all she can do is pray for news of his safety.

The solutions for supportive housing to help the mentally ill are far far below what are required to in CT and the residential programs for our youth at risk are even scarcer. In the state of CT the homeless situation continues to escalate with all organizations reporting in numbers of individuals and families in need rising to alarming levels ! We must think proactively to assist our youth with mental illness rise to a better and healthier life. The alternative is SCAREY. More broken adults, greater drain on taxpayers and families suffering with broken hearts and limited resources to help their children.

I support this bill to mandate our state agencies to move forward with good solutions to help heal our youth. In the last 10 years the numbers of youth with Mental Illness has risen at an alarming rate ! That indicates that the numbers of Homeless will increase thus the number of visits to the Emergency Rooms will increase and the number

We have to ACT NOW to save our communities and build better and stronger LIVES for all citizens of this wonderful nation we call home.

Thank you. Jody Wynn Rodiger, 71 Church Street, Manchester, CT 06040