

CASSIDY COUNSELING CENTER, L.L.C.
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821

February 9, 2009

Connecticut Legislature
Re: Bill SB821

To the Legislature:

I regret not being able to attend the hearing on Feb. 10th, 2009, and want to express my strong opposition to this bill.

I am a Marriage and Family Therapist with a private practice in Waterbury, a huge catchment area. Six other therapists share my space. We have a large referral base including courts, DCF, doctors, schools, attorneys, hospitals and treatment centers, as well as other mental health providers unable to accommodate new clients.

Most of our clients could not receive therapy if it were not for their insurance. This includes the state's HUSKY program. We live in a more stressful time than ever. We are getting more calls than ever. Where will they go for help if MFTs are no longer an option, they can't afford cash or no one else has the space for them? The latter has been a problem in my area.

My whole education focused on individuals and families, sub-systems in the greater society. Therefore, case management is an inherent part of my work as I coordinate care with referral agencies. I feel that MFTs provide as valuable a service as other mental health providers.

Since I am also a licensed alcohol and drug counselor, my services are more valuable. In almost every family I see, substance use is an issue, an increasing societal problem affecting our courts and prisons. As an LADC, I am a provider on several EAP (employee assistance programs) insurance panels with referrals from the UTC companies, the U.S. Postal Service, the U.S. military, all the Waterbury Companies, and others. My counseling of

the employee often saves his/her job and they will continue seeing me under their regular insurance, to stay on track and resolve underlying issues.

Being well-trained, with 18 years' experience in this field, it would be unfortunate to lose the ability to serve the people who seek me out for help because they can't afford therapy on their own.

Most sincerely,

Maureen Cassidy, MS, LMFT, LADC