

Testimony before the Appropriations Committee

February 18, 2009

Good evening, chairs and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Lorna Coons, and I am a resident of Norwich, CT. I am here today to talk about the cuts to Medicaid. I have diabetes, which calls for me to go to a doctor and have my feet checked at least once a month. Consequently, I cannot go see a podiatrist because of the fact that this service is not cover under Medicaid. I already can't get the health care that I need, and now the state is trying to make it even more difficult to get access to medications and services. I need to be able to get to and afford my psychiatric appointments, cardiology appointments for a clamp on my heart, or my specialist who treats my blood clots. I need these services to survive. Without them, I risk major health failure and will have to go to an emergency room and be admitted to the hospital, which I don't think you would like to pay that hospital bill.

I also understand that the state is trying to restrict psychiatric medications. I take 31 different medications. Without the ten psychiatric medications that I take for my paranoid schizophrenia and PTSD, I would end up in a psych ward. Right now I have housing and am barely getting by, if you allow this, I will hear voices and get delusional and I don't believe that you could live with the voices in my head. Cutting down on my medication is a risk for me and my life.

Also, what is the sense of social security giving us a raise and the state taking it out of our checks? I receive \$168 a month for state supplement. I pay \$450 for rent, which leaves me with \$223 for phone, electricity, heat, and groceries. My gas alone costs me \$200 at least in the winter time. If you take this money away, I will have to cut in heat or food or essential items for personal care.

I testified on this same subject last year and here you are again trying to take from us who are in most need. There is not one of you who could live the way I live.

Thank you.

Lorna Coons

Norwich, CT