



BIAC

Brain Injury Association
of Connecticut

A resource in recovery. A partner in prevention.

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Appropriations Committee Public Hearing Testimony
Julie Peters, Executive Director
Brain Injury Association of Connecticut

Good evening Chairpersons Geragosian, Harp and Members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Carrie Kramer. I am the Director of Advocacy and Community Relations at the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut and I am speaking on behalf of our Executive Director, Julie Peters.

Each year, more than 1.5 million Americans will sustain a traumatic brain injury. In Connecticut alone, the average is 22 people every day, 8,000 every year. Both nationwide and in Connecticut, traumatic brain injury disables more people each year than spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, HIV/AIDS and breast cancer combined – in fact, *six times more people*. This public health concern ranks as the leading cause of death and disability in children and young adults. TBI is called the “signature injury” of the Iraq war, and it is estimated that 10% of those who have served and are returning to Connecticut from Iraq or Afghanistan have a possible brain injury.

For over 25 years, the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut has been the only organization in Connecticut which provides information, resources and support for individuals with brain injuries, their families, caregivers, and the professionals who serve them, completely free of charge. Because the state of Connecticut does not have a mechanism to handle inquiries regarding brain injuries, the Department of Social Services contracts with BIAC to operate a toll-free helpline, provide 28 support groups throughout the state, educate students on how to prevent brain injuries from occurring, and sometimes to be that last lifeline that people have.

tonight - young or old, rich or poor, male or female. These individuals and their families will need us to be there.

There is no organization in Connecticut who does what we do and we cannot do it without your support. If we aren't there to answer the phone, who will?

Thank you.