



198 Wethersfield Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06114  
860-244-3343  
860-244-2228 Fax  
1-800-708-9145

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Good Afternoon, Honorable Senator Harp and Representative Geragosian, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony to the Appropriations Committee. My name is Laurie Fresher. I work for the Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery as the Manager of the Hartford Recovery Community Center. I am in sustained recovery which means I have not had a drink or a drug in almost 5 years this month on February 27<sup>th</sup>, but who's counting. I struggled with the disease for more than 25 years.

I found CCAR when I was in a Program in New London, CT. For the first time I heard a profound statement that stayed with me to this day. "Putting a Positive Face on Recovery". I took to heart what it meant and was determined to help educate and advocate for Addiction, Treatment and Recovery. I become a volunteer when I was 3 months clean and participated in CCAR's largest event, the Annual Walk for Recovery every September.

Today I Manage the Hartford Recovery Community Center. I see an average of 250 people a week come through the doors to find hope, support and resources through our Peer to Peer Recovery Support Program. We have 2 All Recovery Meetings a week for the entire community, the recoverees, their families, friends and supporters. We host 2 meetings that are gender specific as well. We host a multitude of trainings, GED, Pardons, Volunteer trainings, financial literacy, yoga and media training to mention a few. I also host Capital Voices of Recovery Live. This is a bi-weekly show to help put a positive face on recovery and educate the community who CCAR is and that recovery is possible. The program includes stories of recovery and guests in the community that deliver an array of services.

I also collaborate with other DHMAS funded programs such as ADRC and Inter Community Mental Health Group.

The center is run with the assistance of volunteers who give back through a Volunteer Management System to enhance their skills and confidence while helping others to achieve recovery. This is evident through our Telephone Recovery Support Program and Center operations. To date the Hartford volunteers have served 7,329.25 hours.

Since we opened the Center in 2007 the numbers of hours and volunteers have tripled. I would like to state that CCAR has built the bridge to long-term recovery for anyone wishing to participate in our Recovery Community Centers. I am living proof that recovery works.

Sincerely,  
Laurie Fresher  
Hartford Recovery Center Manager  
CCAR