

TESTIMONY ON THE NEED FOR SUPPORTED HOUSING IN CONNECTICUT
FOR PEOPLE WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES

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As Rob Lockhart, Director of Laurel House Housing often says, "No recovery is possible without housing." A tragic situation exists of gridlock of people in nursing homes, shelters, emergency rooms, prisons and state mental hospitals, most tragically people in large warehouse, oppressive, torturous, hellhole, and prison dungeon state institutions. These poor people have no where to go. Things are so bad there are people, who literally choose to be homeless, for lack of affordable safe housing. Because the conditions in the shelters are so bad that people are badly beaten and Robbed of all their possessions. As Gabrielle Kitchener, says, "An individual in an institution should have a discharged plan started the day they enter the institution including a discharge plan with an address."

The plight of homeless people is especially bad in the winter, when they get stranded at shelters with out transportation to food and other services, are left to their own devices in the howling blizzard fierce winter winds.

And victims of circumstance, are the homeless people who end up in warehouse prison torturous hellhole dungeon state institutions because they have no where to go, and get Stranded at places as hellholes such as CVH, where they barely subsist locked up against their will with no place to live year after year after year.

This year gives us an opportunity to help the homeless in hellhole oppressive torturous dungeon prison warehouse state institutions because the Governor and the Legislature are closing down Cedercrest State Hospital. This is an opportunity to discharge as many inmates as possible to the community, to supported apartments with community support services.

Laurel House, where I am fortunate enough to live, in Stamford, Connecticut, has the National model program as an alternative to hospitalization in oppressive torturous dungeon prison warehouse state hospitals. Laurel House, with the Director of Laurel House, Steve Dougherty, has rescued people who were labeled as basket cases on the back wards of state hospitals and given them supported housing, with support services including section eight, electricity, heat, furniture, food, clothing and help with employment and education and available computers for member and staff use.

Laurel House participated in the famous and smooth closing down of the notorious oppressive dungeon prison warehouse hellhole Fairfield Hills Hospital, and hundreds of people were released to housing in the community, especially successfully to Laurel House itself. I myself, without Laurel House would still be in an oppressive dungeon prison hellhole state mental hospital or homeless and in this bitter cold biting winter blizzard wind. I am grateful for my apartment at Laurel House and the keys around my neck, keys I didn't not have to the doors of the state hospital where I was imprisoned For seven long years against my will. As Bob Dylan said. "come in he said, I'll give you shelter from the storm." I want to emphasize that supported housing for people with

psychiatric disability, especially people released from institutions, has to be planned very carefully, with individually tailored support arrangements, and with the supports of Psychiatrists, social workers, medical doctors, available grocery shopping, transportation and many other needed services so that people do not get stranded in Godforsaken places in the middle of nowhere. When people are relapsed from institutions properly and carefully, which takes a long time to do, they will join in with Martin Luther King in saying, "free at last, free at last, thank God almighty we're free at last!!!"