

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE APPROPRIATION COMMITTEE

DMHAS BUDGET HEARING

FEBRUARY 18, 2010

GOOD EVENING MEMBERS OF THE APPROPRIATIONS' COMMITTEE. MY NAME IS ROBBYN SIBLEY AND I AM A REGISTERED VOTER FROM OAKDALE, CT.

I AM HERE TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES BUDGET AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GREATLY NEEDED IN THIS STATE--ESPECIALLY IF AND WHEN CEDARCREST HOSPITAL CLOSES. WHERE ARE THE FORMER RESIDENTS GOING TO LIVE? THOSE NOT PUT INTO ANOTHER INSTITUTION, THAT IS. WE HAVE SO MANY PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS IN THIS STATE. I WAS AT THE LAUNDROMAT IN NORWICH ON SUNDAY NIGHT AND SAW A HOMELESS MAN SLEEPING WHILE SITTING ON A STOOL IN THE CORNER.

THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR SO MANY PEOPLE TO BE HOMELESS. THEY SAY OVER \$15 MILLION WILL BE SAVED BY CLOSING CEDARCREST. WE NEED TO USE THAT MONEY FOR HOUSING VOUCHERS FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING SO THAT PEOPLE CAN IMPROVE THEIR LIVES AND BE INDEPENDENT--NOT DEPENDENT ON EXPENSIVE STATE SERVICES. PLEASE, WE NEED MORE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING TO HELP THE PEOPLE OF THIS STATE, WHETHER THEY ARE CHILDREN, YOUNG ADULTS, OR ADULTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS. IT IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS WE NEED TO WORK ON.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

ROBBYN SIBLEY

OAKDALE, CT