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Hello. My name is Phillip Valentine and but for the grace of God, I have not had a drink or a drug since December 28th, 1987 and that puts me in my 23rd year of recovery. Because of recovery, my life has turned out better than I could possibly have imagined. I am married to a wonderful woman, father to 5 incredible children, slave to a dog, owner of a home, involved in my community, dependable payer of taxes and perfect in my voting record over the last 22 years, I haven't missed a single vote.

In my professional life, I have the privilege of serving as the executive director of the Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR) for the last 6+ years. I have worked for CCAR for more than 11 years. CCAR organizes the recovery community to (1) put a face on recovery (offer ourselves as living proof that recovery is real) and (2) provide peer-to-peer recovery support services. We are the leading recovery community organization in Connecticut representing more than 3,500 persons in recovery. We have 16 paid employees, an active Board, 4 recovery community centers (Hartford, Bridgeport, Willimantic and New London) and a remarkable volunteer force. In 2009, 273 volunteers contributed 15,271 hours of service. All of this would not have been possible without the foresight, leadership and vision of DMHAS. DMHAS has led the nation in the development of recovery-oriented systems of care. I have a vested interest not only in my recovery, but the health of the recovery community and therefore our state. It is vital that the work of DMHAS continues as seamlessly as possible. So, I am here today to offer my personal support, and the support of CCAR, for the appointment of Pat Rehmer as Commissioner of DMHAS.

I had the honor of serving on the committee that interviewed candidates for the Commissioner position. In my opinion, and I believe I speak for the entire committee; Ms. Rehmer was by far and away the top candidate. She was (and is) best positioned to continue the work of DMHAS. The attributes that make her right for the job, in my opinion, are her:

- Previous experience and an excellent track record as Deputy Commissioner,
- Vision and understanding of the "big picture",
- Ability to motivate and inspire the people working for her and with her,
- A deep commitment and dedication to public service and,
- Earned support from the recovery community.

I, we, strongly encourage the committee to approve Ms. Rehmer's appointment as the Commissioner of DMHAS. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Phillip A. Valentine
CCAR Executive Director