

**Testimony before the Human Services Committee
March 9, 2010
SB 251**

Good afternoon, Chairs and members of the Human Services Committee. My name is Alicia Woodsby, and I am the Public Policy Director for the National Alliance on Mental Illness, CT (NAMI-CT). I am here to testify on SB 251 – AAC the Long Term Care Advisory Council.

NAMI-CT strongly supports SB 251, which would add a member to the Long Term Care Advisory Council who "has expertise in mental health issues." This new appointee will be an important voice for people with mental illnesses, as well as professionals in the mental health field.

The Long Term Care Advisory Council has been, and continues to be, an influential group of advocates and policymakers who make valuable and consequential recommendations to the legislature regarding long term care policy. Many constituencies are represented on the Council, but people with mental illnesses who use long term care services have not had a specific representative.

Thousands of Connecticut residents with mental illnesses reside in long term care settings and are served by the state's long term care infrastructure. It is imperative that this population, along with the providers who care for them, are able to add their collective voice to the important discussions that occur in Council meetings.

NAMI-CT strongly urges you to pass SB 251 so that the mental health community has representation on the Long Term Care Advisory Council.

Thank you.