



State of Connecticut

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**Appropriations Committee
Public Hearing Testimony
Thursday, March 3, 2011**

Re: The Brain Injury Association of Connecticut as affected by H.B. No. 6380 AN ACT CONCERNING THE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2013.

Good Afternoon Chairman Harp, Chairman Walker, Ranking Member Kane, Ranking Member Miner and Appropriations Committee Membership. I am Mike Alberts, 50th District State Representative and I am thankful for this opportunity to submit testimony in opposition of the elimination of the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut's operating grant.

In the four terms I have served as a legislator, I have received numerous inquiries from individuals who are truly at a loss as to where to turn when confronted with a loved one who needs services following a traumatic brain injury. In all those cases, the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut has been a lifeline; a steadfast resource and avenue of support. The proposed action and loss of this resource, I fear, will make a very difficult situation for those in need, worse, and ultimately cost the state more in the long run.

The operating grant elimination proposed in HB 6380, will severely curtail BIAC's ability to continue to provide resource facilitation, information, telephone support and outreach to the injured and their families. It will transfer the great needs of those who utilize these services onto an already overloaded state social service system.

It is my understanding that BIAC was contracted in the first place because DSS has no mechanism to handle resource facilitation calls. Further, that calls to BIAC's helpline have increased by over 600% in the past 5 years. This being the case, who exactly will be responsible within the Department to provide these highly specialized and increasingly utilized services?

I believe that the *Brain Injury Association of Connecticut* saves the state money each day through fewer institutionalizations, ER visits, incarcerations and by helping to reduce rates of recidivism. The system of care for people with traumatic brain injury is something that needs to be handled with great sensitivity, knowledge and attention. BIAC has been a true champion in this regard and I urge the Committee to continue their commitment to them and the many Connecticut families who utilize their services.

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