

March 4, 2011



Senator Toni Nathaniel Harp, Co-Chair
Representative Toni E. Walker, Co-Chair
Members of the Appropriations Committee

Testimony Regarding the Governor's Proposed FY '12 Budget: IICAPS

Good Evening, my name is James Osborne, Director of Clinical Services for Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Hartford in Hartford and New Haven. I am here to advocate for the grant dollars in IICAPS programming.

IICAPS is an intensive in home child and adolescent psychiatric service which serves children and adolescents with severe emotional/psychiatric disturbances, who are at risk for psychiatric institutional-based treatment or are "gravely disabled" and unresponsive to clinic-based care. Since Catholic Charities began IICAPS services in Hartford in 2002, over 250 clients and families have been served. Only three families had unplanned discharges with one entering residential treatment.

Grant dollars have been used to serve children and families, who otherwise did not qualify for services. Around 2009 the grant dollar amount was reduced to approximately \$50,000. Since 2009 Catholic Charities has served 53 client families-- 2 families had no insurance and fell under the grant funds. Five client families had private insurances, which refused payments totaling write offs of over \$40,000. Across the state, loss of grant funding would have a dramatic impact on our most disadvantaged families with the highest psychiatric needs. Services would simply not be available to them.

IICAPS programs are anticipating a significant increase in referrals in the coming year due to the elimination of Family Support Teams (FST) from the proposed budget and their conversion to Multi-Dimensional Family Therapy (MDFT) programs. IICAPS programs are able to serve children under the age of 9, whereas MDFT programs do not.

Our primary concern with cutting the \$699,000 grant funding from the budget is that clients and families, without financial support or a safety net to partake in IICAPS, will be denied adequate and appropriate services. This would translate into clients being forced into utilizing higher levels of care, such as inpatient psychiatric or residential facilities. It would also mean that children and families will suffer increased family disruption and chaos until a crisis arises that forces inpatient or residential care. The negative impact on children and their families is needless suffering, higher insurance costs, potential loss of employment for parents and educational disruptions for children to name just a few. These potential negative effects can be averted with appropriate use of intensive in home services provided by IICAPS providers.

**Testimony of Michael Williams
In Support of Continued Funding for the
Security Deposit Guarantee Program**

My name is Michael Williams. I live in Stamford, Connecticut. I am here today to speak in support of continued funding for the Security Deposit Guarantee Program. I grew up in the Southfield Village public housing project in Stamford, known as one of the most dangerous in the city. As a child, I knew I wanted to grow up to live in a safer environment. I am now a divorced father of two children – a 16 year-old boy and a 12 year-old girl – and I want the same kind of safety for my kids.

I waited on the Section 8 waiting list for five years but then lost my voucher because with child support payment obligations I was unable to save for a security deposit. This has been devastating to me because it has meant that I am essentially homeless, shuffling between relatives' homes and, most importantly, unable to see my children on a regular basis. I had been looking forward to the day when my children could stay with me on the weekends in my own place. This has been especially hard for my son who is at an age where he really needs his father in his life.

I had hoped to move from a tough area of Bridgeport to an area near the Trumbull line that would be safe for my kids and near to their mother's place in Trumbull. I was looking forward to working with New Opportunities of Waterbury, one of the mobility counseling programs in the state, to make this move. If I had been given access to the Security Deposit Guarantee program, my life and the life of my kids would have been very different from what it is today. Please fully fund the Security Deposit Guarantee Program so other families will have the opportunity to use the housing programs that are available to the.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.