

4 March 2011

Public Hearing Testimony
Appropriations Committee
CT Legislative Office Building

Regarding DSS Line Item "Services for persons with disabilities."

Thank you for the privilege to support you in making challenging funding decisions in this difficult economic time. I am Dr. Stephen D. Sarfaty, a CT licensed psychologist and board certified neuropsychologist with 30 years of clinical experience working with brain injury survivors, their families, and health care providers in CT.

Thirty years ago I joined with multiple families of brain injury survivors and Ken Smith, head of CT Department of Social Services, in the State of CT Interdepartmental Committee on Traumatic Brain Injury which recognized that enormous resources were being ineffectively consumed by multiple state agencies through piecemeal and uncoordinated efforts to address complex and pressing needs of survivors and families.

The Committee's efforts resulted in five regional hearings throughout the state of CT which culminated in the establishment of the first statewide task force in the nation on traumatic brain injury to which I was appointed. I wrote the definition of traumatic brain injury for the task force.

A coalition of families and professionals established the CTBISG the origin of BIAC of which I was a charter board member and have remained a satellite support group leader in one form or another for 30 years.

I have had leadership responsibilities with all the major inpatient injury rehabilitation programs at Gaylord Hospital, the Hospital for Special Care, and the Rehab Hospital of CT, as well as consulted to acute care, day treatment, neurobehavioral, skilled nursing, group home, supported living, outpatient, and other levels of brain injury services throughout the state.

Before the efforts of BIAC and visionary public servants Governor O'Neill and Claire Callan (sp?) set the ball in motion to establish the line item funding we are here to discuss today, CT Brain Injury

Services were in the dark ages and survivors and families were left to cast about for themselves without support and little success.

Other testimony will educate you to the dramatic improvements in the lives of survivors, families, and providers in successfully meeting the complex challenges of brain injury made possible by this very small line item whose loss is neither cost nor clinically effective for anyone, including state government.

My testimony will provides tangible insight into the value of investment and profitable return from this line item through a very brief and abbreviated tour of lives touched by brain injury.

Brain injury survivors are more than the statistics of thousands of injured persons in CT each year.

It's personal!:

- Dr. Atkins of diet fame died from brain injury.
- George Burns, comedian.
- Barbara Mandrell, country singer.
- Kurt Vonnegut, author.
- Gary Coleman, actor.
- Dr. I. King Jordan, first deaf president of Gallaudet University.
- Reginald Denny and Rodney King beaten in the LA riots of 1992.
- Cari Lightner, daughter of the founder of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.
- Frank Markosek, coal miner in Crandall Canyon collapse of 2006.
- Nodar Kumaritashvili, luger who died hours before the 2010 winter Olympics.
- Kevin Pearce, Olympic snowboarding hopeful.
- Brandon Patch, little leaguer who took a baseball to the head in 2003.
- Natasha Richardson, who died from a skiing accident in 2009.
- Jim Moffett, Feb 2008, saved elderly bus passengers from being struck by a truck.
- Bob Woodruff & Kimberly Dozier embedded Iraq war correspondents hit by IEDs.
- Katherine Graham, head of the Washington Post and Pulitzer Prize winning author.
- Mother Theresa.
- Steven Hawking, physicist.
- Gary Kildall, computer pioneer.
- Claire Almaleki, injured by her father because he thought she was too American.
- Jimmy Buffett, musician.
- Brad Epstein, pediatric neurosurgeon from a bicycle accident.
- Jenna Brown, ten-month old infant DOA at Hartford Hospital.
- My father.
- My brother, twice.
- My maternal grandmother in a nursing home.
- Myself.
- Prince William.
- Mario Cuomo.
- Nancy Moore Thurmond, oldest granddaughter of Senator Strom Thurmond.

- Sonny Bono, mayor and US Congressman.
- Jean Chrétien, former Canadian Prime Minister.
- James Brady, Reagan Press Secretary.
- And YOU, personified by the recent point blank gunshot injury by Jared Lee Loughner of Representative Gabrielle Giffords.

For all of us and for yourselves, we urge you to retain this important an effective funding.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SD Sarfaty', written in a cursive style.

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