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Sen. Martin Looney
Rep. Claire Janowski
Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee
Room 1000, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

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 24th 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 five incredible children, owner of a home, involved in my community, dependable payer of taxes and perfect in my voting record over the last 23 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 seven years. I have worked for CCAR for more than twelve. 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 twelve paid employees, an active Board, three recovery community centers (Hartford, Bridgeport and Willimantic) and a remarkable volunteer force. In 2010, 319 volunteers contributed 14,426 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 write this letter in support of the appointment of Pat Rehmer as Commissioner of DMHAS.

In 2009, 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. And with the transition to Governor Malloy's leadership, she still is in the best position 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 Commissioner and 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