



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES
A Healthcare Service Agency

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COMMISSIONER

Testimony by Patricia Rehmer, MSN, Commissioner
Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Before the Public Health Committee
February 9, 2011

Good morning Sen. Stillman, Rep. Ritter, and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee. I am Commissioner Patricia Rehmer of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and I am here this morning to address our concerns with **HB 5045 AN ACT REQUIRING HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS TO DISPLAY PHOTOGRAPHIC IDENTIFICATION BADGES DURING WORK HOURS.**

We have heard concerns about this bill from our clients that are served in the community. The bill as we understand it would require that individuals providing direct care to our clients in the community would be required to wear an identification badge. While we certainly appreciate the need for our clients to know who they are receiving services from, clients receiving psychiatric services may view this measure as creating additional stigma for them in their communities. Psychiatric treatment is a very private matter to many of the individuals that we serve, and we are obligated to protect their privacy rights. If the committee decides to move forward with this legislation, we would request some language be included to allow individuals who provide psychiatric services in the community to wear a badge that is more generic in nature and does not identify the agency if it is solely an agency that provides psychiatric services.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee on this issue and I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.