

**Testimony of Muriel Tomer**  
**Health and Hospitals Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee**  
**February 22, 2012**

Good evening Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and members of the Committee:

My name is Muriel Tomer and I live in Naugatuck, CT. I am testifying tonight as the Mother of a client of CLRP. Over the last seven years, CLRP has represented my son for violations of his rights while a client of Rushford, in Meriden. These violations have been wide-ranging and egregious, and he is currently being represented for four different actions. If it were not for the legal services that CLRP has performed for my son, his life would be dramatically different, and not in a way that would benefit him.

Currently, my son's housing situation is at risk. If he has nowhere to turn for legal help in this area of his life, then he will be devastated. There is already an enormous "appropriate" housing shortage in this state for people with disabilities. I have already had to take my son out of this state once to get my son out of homelessness in CT and to keep him safe. Without CLRP's assistance recently, my son would have wound up in the ER when he didn't receive his medication from his psychiatric provider. CLRP ensures that my son's rights to a normal, appropriate life have remained intact. CLRP is more necessary than you may realize. As a parent, I advocate for my son on an almost constant basis, mainly because the services are so sadly lacking in CT for people with disabilities. If I didn't have CLRP to rely on when things fall apart, as they often do, I don't know where I would be either!

I cannot adequately express to you how important the services are that CLRP provides to people in the state of CT. They are immediate with their responses for help, totally professional, and they are the finest legal advocates for people with disabilities that we have in the state. If you reduce funding for this dedicated, invaluable group of attorneys, then that will severely limit their capacity to legally advocate for the population they serve. We have already seen funding cuts to various services throughout the state regarding people with disabilities. Please do not cut any funding from CLRP's services. In fact, I implore you to increase funding, as there is never enough legal advocacy available to people with disabilities!

Please increase CLRP's funding, do not cut their funding, and start normalizing these critical services to people with disabilities in CT. We don't have nearly enough services as it is!

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify.