Testimony of Mark A. Buri
Before the Appropriations & Human Services Committees
July 24, 2012

Good morning distinguished members of the Appropriations and Human Services Committees. My name is Mark A. Buri from Stratford, and I am here today as a proud member of Bridge House, Inc., a Psychosocial Rehabilitation Program for Adults in Bridgeport. I would first like to thank all of you for this opportunity to testify before all of you today.

My reason for speaking to you today concerns my opposition to the Section 1115 Demonstration Waiver Application for the Medicaid Low-Income Adult (LIA) Program. My Medicaid was almost cutoff due to DSS not being able to process my "Redetermination Form" in a timely manner because of them being over burdened and short staffed!

I suffer from a mental illness, Severe Depression and Anxiety, as well as many other physical illnesses for which I take many medications on a daily basis as well as see doctors and counselors for treatments.

Now, I would like to share my latest experience dealing with the Department of Social Services (DSS) and them failing to process my Redetermination Form on time. My redetermination form was due by May 20th of this year, and I had filled it out completely and delivered it in person on May 17th. Around June 15th I had gotten the first "Notice of Discontinuance Due to Failure To Redetermine Eligibility Medical Assistance" from DSS. I went down in person to discuss this letter and straighten out the problem, and was told by the woman at the information desk that everything was fine after she went on her computer and told me that my form was received and processed on

May 29th! Then, about two weeks later I got my second notice stating that my medical assistance (Medicaid) would be discontinued after June 30th. I then went down again to DSS in Bridgeport to try and resolve this matter. After being there for and hour and a half in line, I finally was told to use the phone and call a supervisor, which I did, and that supervisor was not the right one. So after several phone calls later I finally was able to get the right supervisor assigned to my case, and she finally made the correction on the computer and my Medicaid was finally available on July 6th! I had gone at least 3 weeks before I could get my medication refilled. I also had to cancel one of my appointments with my counselor that I see normally on a once a week basis.

Things are already bad at DSS, and if you allow these cuts to occur the situation with Medicaid will be so much worse for all Low Income Adults such as myself. It was bad enough for me, and I had a car and was able to actually go down to the DSS Office in Bridgeport, but what about all the other people in the State that are on Medicaid, and don't have a car or are unable to physically make it to go in person to DSS; they would have to try and call DSS and resolve the situation over the phone. It is impossible to get anyone from DSS to call you back now, so if you make the proposed cuts things will get out of control and so many adults in this state will be without medical assistance for God knows how long? Please don't allow this bill to pass!

Thank you for your time, and thank you for hearing the voice of someone who would be directly affected by this bill if it is allowed to pass.