

Testimony Before the Human Services Committee

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Barbara Albert, Hartford, CT

Good evening members of the Human Services Committee, also to everyone else. My name is Barbara Albert, registered voter, renter in Hartford, Multiply Medically Challenged, including Mental Illnesses. I'm on Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security Disability. I was employable before my illnesses became too much. I do volunteer work when able. I am an activist and advocate for Human Rights, mostly for Mental Health Rights and Rights for Disadvantaged People, no matter what age.

This is my testimony concerning Raised Bill No. H.B. 5450, An Act Establishing a Basic Health Program.

Considering that Health Care Reform is proceeding towards an uncertain future, with the upcoming November Presidential election, and the Super Committee's lack of bipartisanship anything, automatic cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, and other programs will result. Unless President Obama has changed his deficit plan, the same cuts will happen.

I think the basics of the Affordable Care Act needed to be implemented a long time ago, just as the Federal Mental Health Parity and Addictions Equity Act of 2008 needed to be fully implemented a long time ago.

The Americans with Disabilities Act is almost 21 years old. The Federal Poverty Level for a household of one, in 2012, at 100%, is \$11,170. My so called income is not even that. A lot of us know that "specifically intended" Federal Funds, quite often, gets re-allocated. My over 20 years experiences with the Department of Social Services, the inefficient, more than frustrating, more than often dehumanizing, is not the Agency capable of making this a possibility.

Every human being deserves affordable, quality health care, no matter what ailment or condition. No matter what our age. Illness does not discriminate. I have over one dozen doctors—none, except dental and vision, accepts Medicaid. I've called Customer Service with questions—received zero answers. I have no reason to be optimistic. Please don't support DSS running this.

"Nothing about us, without us, is for us." – unknown

Perhaps if the Department of Social Services would stop referring to people like me as "assistant units", perhaps it might help it feel less dehumanizing. I was able to find out the Medicaid transportation phone number, before receiving the "official Husky Health CT Plan" information, at the end of January 2012. I've already given up asking for their help.

And I very much resent that what I'm doing, being called a "game". I don't play. For me, and a whole lot of others, this is literally life or death.

"Of all forms of inequality, injustice in healthcare is the most shocking and inhumane." – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Thank you for listening.