

Rita McParland
63 Nutmeg Drive
Manchester, CT 06040

March 28, 2012

re: Raised Bill # 5553 "An Act Concerning Substance Abuse Programs"

Mr. Chairman:

My name is Rita McParland. I am writing this letter in support of HB 5553 an act concerning substance abuse programs.

Some 17 years ago Mr. Paul Waters presented a multiple offences DUI program to the medical advisory board of the Department of Motor Vehicles. This weekend program was approved and for the past sixteen years has had a significant impact on the DWI offender.

Over the years I have had the occasion to speak with many of the program participants prior to their starting the weekend program. Without exception they said after their first DUI arrest they would never offend again only to have it reoccur.

This program was designed to provide critical intervention and have immediate and long lasting impact on the lives of those motorists who have a second or subsequent DWI offence.

Simply put the program has been a huge success. I find it extremely difficult to understand why 14-227f which governed this program was repealed when it was so successful. It is my understanding that many in government never knew this program existed. It appears to me that with all the negative press the Department of Motor Vehicles has received they would be anxious to praise this program and the overall success it has enjoyed.

The program doesn't cost the state of Connecticut one penny. The cost is borne entirely by the offender making for many the first time they have been invested in their own recovery.

Results of the weekend program sometimes revealed psychological/psychiatric problems that required the use of prescription medications. Without this program how will these issues be identified?

My husband, John McParland, was a member of the Commonwealth Group until September 2011. I was a member of the office staff for over five years so my knowledge of this program is 1st hand. Many lives were changed and a reduction in multiple DWI's was realized due to this wonderful program.

I would ask you to endorse Section 3, a program designed specifically to address the multiple offender. Not to do so would be an injustice to the state of Connecticut.


Rita McParland