



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

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

Patricia A. Rehmer, MSN
Commissioner

Testimony by Patricia Rehmer, MSN, Commissioner
Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Before the Public Health Committee
March 7, 2012

Good morning Sen. Gerratana, 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 speak in favor of **HB 5037 An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Concerning Public Health.**

The bill before you would put the Psychiatric Security Review Board (PSRB) under DMHAS as a separate division, and would change the liability statutes to allow for the state to recoup dollars from acquittees who fall under the jurisdiction of the Board and who were treated or confined in a state hospital. We are recommending a few changes to the liability language. We ask that you remove the language in the bill that gives an exemption to the spouses of acquittees and remove section 3 from the bill in its entirety. This language for recoupment of dollars is similar to provisions that are currently in place for individuals who serve time in corrections and for individuals who are served in our state hospitals.

The PSRB has functioned in DMHAS for administrative purposes only since 1985. The statutory change before you would allow DMHAS to realize administrative savings in the long-term but would do nothing to change the mission or function of the Board. They would continue to have members appointed by the Governor with specific roles and expertise, and would continue to hold public safety as their primary mission.

The Board is also asking for language changes that further clarify its independent decision making and that the staff assigned to the Board must be allowed to follow Board mandates. We are in support of their suggested changes. The PSRB has attached to its testimony a copy of the bill with all the proposed changes.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.