

**Testimony before the Appropriations Committee
2.15.13**

**Regarding:
HB 6350: An Act Concerning the Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2015, and Other
Provisions Relating to Revenue
Health and Hospitals-DMHAS**

Senator Harp, Representative Walker and members of the committee:

My name is Tyler French and I am an addict. I decided to speak today on behalf of myself and the many other addicts and alcoholics that are fortunate enough to be here. I do not know much about statistics or politics but I do know a lot about addiction. If you take these services or drastically cut funding the chances for recovery are dramatically cut as well. These services which are gateways back into society cost money yes but an addict in active addiction will cost more in resources. It will cost more than an addict in recovery than an addict who has taken the courageous step to admit their powerlessness over their addiction and seek help so that they can return to society a productive wage earning citizen. Most addicts cannot just quit using or drinking. Although many are very intelligent we lack the tools and skills to make decisions on our own. I have suffered with an increasingly devastating addiction to heroin for seven years. My family discovered my addiction by receiving a call in the middle of the night saying that I had overdosed. I was declared dead medically for over a minute. I have damaged relationships with friends, family, and girlfriends. I have been convicted of felonies and incarcerated several times. I abandoned my daughter. In a few days it will be her birthday and I will miss out not because I am in the street due to active addiction because I am doing everything I can in treatment to get back to her. I am currently a resident at Help Incorporated in Waterbury, services provided to me in an effort to curb my disease. I am in treatment so that I can be one of the fortunate ones who can regain what I lost. I want to be a functioning member of society. To do the right thing I am tired of using and I am tired of addiction. Without these services there are so many people who will not make it. I am truly saddened by the fact that addiction will never end. These services give to those that need the help. They allow us to help ourselves and one another. My name is Tyler French and I am an addict.