

**PUBLIC HEARING RE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

Patricia Jean Tagliavore
February 15, 2013

Dear members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Patricia Jean Tagliavore, and I am an advocate, mentor and counseling graduate student at Central Connecticut State University, living in New Britain, CT. I am writing this testimony in regards to the Department of Public Health's proposed reduction in funding for School-Based Health Centers (SBHC) in the Governor's Bill No. 6350, line T325.

As a young adult in recovery from an anxiety disorder and an eating disorder, I have sought out support through my own private insurance, but *first* through the university that I attend. While my school does not have what would be considered a School-Based Health Center (SBHC), the accessibility of the services through my academic community, gave me insight into what an SBHC could offer for my younger peers.

Specifically, I turned to my school's services in a time of desperation. I was experiencing difficulties with regulating my eating, depression, and severe obsessions, which negatively impacted my academic success and I was unable to function as a student. Just knowing that I had access to such services in a setting that I was already comfortable with relieved me from the feelings of isolation and aloneness that I had been experiencing.

Further, mental health services through my school afforded me, and my parents, the peace of mind of avoiding a bill that I could not afford at the time as a struggling student, and an ease of access to resources within a familiar environment that I was already regularly attending. Additionally, I would conclude that by having a place to turn to in a time of need that was on campus served as motivation for me to go to school in general, thus promoting functionality indirectly.

Having access to health services directly in a school setting, literally served as the first formal step in my recovery from an eating disorder. It was there that I first acknowledged completely my problem, and recognized the need for help. Had I not had a place to turn to when I felt I was in crisis, I very well could have spun even more out of control, denied my problems and/or detached myself completely from education.

I believe that comprehensive environments foster inspiration, a sense of community and possibilities, and encourage exploration in all avenues of health. In a world where individuals commonly struggle with co-occurring impairments, it only makes sense to move in the direction of collaborative health service environments.

I respectfully urge you to consider the benefits of expanding and creating more School-Based Health Centers in Connecticut. Please stand in opposition against a reduction in School-Based Health Centers that is found in the Governor's proposed budget, line T325; and I sincerely thank you for your further consideration of this issue.

Member of Join Rise Be
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