

D.S.S. PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY
Testimony before the Appropriations Committee
Friday, February 22, 2013
Barbara Albert, Hartford Renter

Good evening Appropriations Committee Co-Chairs Senator Harp, and Representative Walker, also to everyone else.

My name is Barbara Albert, renter, registered voter in Hartford, CT. Human Being. I'm on Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. I have multiple medical challenges, including mental illnesses. I am called indigent, am unemployable, even though I have several volunteer jobs. I did do 'regular work' before becoming too ill to be able to function. I will die more than twenty five years earlier than the 'general population', according to 'scientific investigation'. Quite frankly, I can't wait. Every time I go to a doctor I get diagnosed with something else and that means, "I don't know how to help you, but, we can do band aide medical care, to help with symptoms." This is not being treated like a human being. This is not "Quality of Life". Or even close to pretending like it is. Insurance Companies, including Medicare and the Department of Social Services considers acupuncture and chiropractic medical help is not for people like me, neither is seeing a nutritionist. I've been figuring out home remedies for years, and not for the worse. Even the only dentist choices I'm allowed looks like they just crawled out of a grease pit. No way will I allow this to get anywhere near my mouth, never mind go in. Yet, the Department of Social Services, this is where I'm expected to go, and acceptable. Would you go?

Needing to still rely very much on medical help, (for several severe and chronic medical challenges), what's supposedly in place, is still is not here, or there, or anywhere, or accessible. Under the excuse people like me, deserve to "stagnate", possibly permanently. I am very capable of doing many things, just like anyone else. Just like what I'm doing here, or at the food pantry, or involved with peace activism, or standing up for human and civil rights.

I've always felt like I'm being told that I might as well put my head in between my legs, and kiss my you know what goodbye. After over twenty years, unfortunately, D.S.S. they don't seem to care about people like me. If the "antiquated computer and phone systems" don't work, guess what? Get a Federal Grant, and fix it. If people neglect their duties... fire them. Stop playing games with our life. A lot of my medical challenges continue to deteriorate; now there are even more. In not so much time, challenges that no one known reason as to why they happen, or as to how to stop them, except 'band aide' medicine. My mental health is deteriorating beyond repair, just as my body. I don't have time to "stagnate", waiting for how else the "richest state in the country" can figure out how to balance a budget, besides on the backs of human beings, already making do with nothing as it is. I've heard "that the opposite of poverty is not wealth, its justice".

I feel beyond repulsed, being one of more than the 800 ralliers at "Save Our Safety Net Day", on January 30, 2013, witness Governor Malloy wave \$20 Million dollars in our face like a carrot, to just fling it in the manure. He said it was the "first down payment". Now I'm reading the notifications I am? I think I want our t-shirt back.

I don't figure I have much time left in this part of the journey. Certainly, not to "stagnate". I resent thinking that the only way for the budget to be balanced, is on the backs of the most economically unequal people, in our country. This is not "shared sacrifice". I respectfully request, please do not allow this to happen. No one asks to be sick, no one.

Dorothy Day, a civil disobedience peace activist, said, "Our problems stem from our acceptance of this filthy, rotten system." Please don't accept things as they appear. Investigate. Question and keep asking, "If we don't question authority, we'll lose our humanity."

Thank you for listening.

(Because we are the 99%)