

The Connecticut General Assembly

Joint Committee on Appropriations

Sen. Toni Nathaniel Harp
Co-Chairperson



Rep. Toni E. Walker
Co-Chairperson

November 13, 2012

Patricia Rehmer
Commissioner
Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
410 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Rehmer:

We are writing in regards to funding for the Connecticut Legal Rights Project for housing advocacy. It is our understanding that there may be some confusion regarding our intent for continued funding in the next biennium.

Connecticut Legal Rights Project (CLRP) has had a \$350,000 grant for ten years from the Melville Charitable Trust that funded 80% of the agency's housing advocacy and that will expire at the end of this year. The revised FY 13 budget included \$175,000 for CLRP to continue its housing advocacy, which represented what was needed for the last six months of this fiscal year. We anticipated that the funding would be annualized in Fiscal Years 14 and 15. It is our hope that the Governor's proposed budget will reflect annualized funding for CLRP's housing advocacy.

We would be happy to discuss this matter further. Please contact us at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Toni Nathaniel Harp in cursive.

Toni Nathaniel Harp
Co-Chairperson

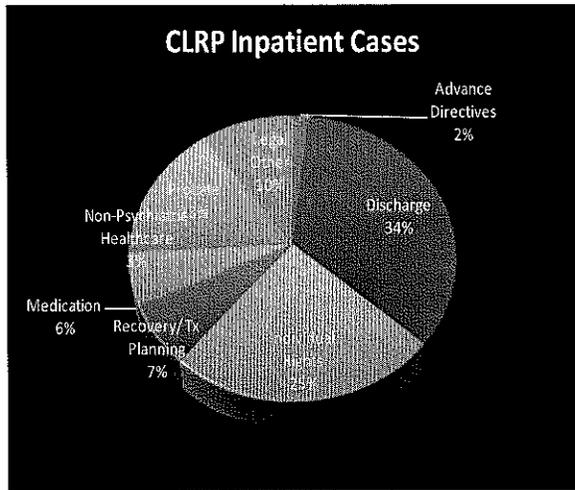
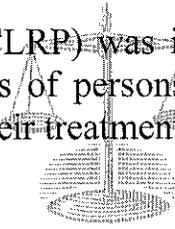
Handwritten signature of Toni E. Walker in cursive.

Toni E. Walker
Co-Chairperson

cc: Benjamin Barnes, Secretary, Office of Policy and Management
Alan Calandro, Director, Office of Fiscal Analysis

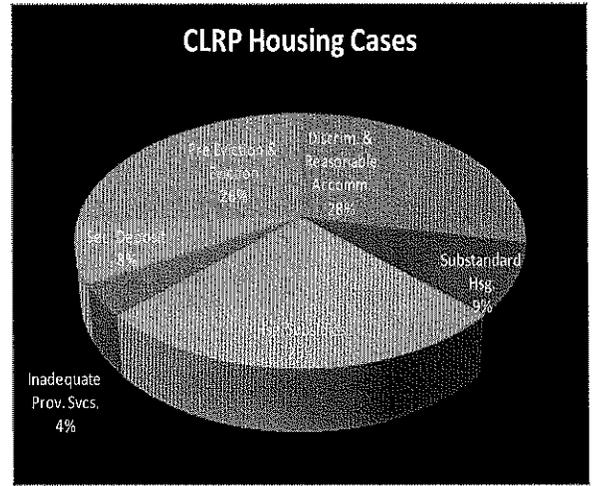
CONNECTICUT LEGAL RIGHTS PROJECT

The Connecticut Legal Rights Project (CLRP) was incorporated in 1990, under the terms of a Consent Order, to protect the legal rights of persons with severe and persistent mental illness served by the state on matters related to their treatment recovery and civil rights.



On average, CLRP represents the following types of clients annually:

318 inpatient
363 housing



CLRP receives state funds to represent clients (1) institutionalized in DMHAS facilities; or (2) whose stable housing is threatened. When a 10-year grant that funded most housing advocacy expired in December of last year, **\$175,000** was put in the state budget to cover that loss for six months, with the expectation it would be **annualized to \$350,000** this year to continue statewide housing advocacy for DMHAS clients. Instead all housing funds were cut and funding for inpatient services were reduced to \$499,378.

The **NET RESULT** of cuts in the DMHAS Legal Services line item is a nearly **50% FUNDING REDUCTION**.

There is no money for housing advocacy	\$350,000
Funds for inpatient advocacy were cut 22%	\$140,000
	\$490,000

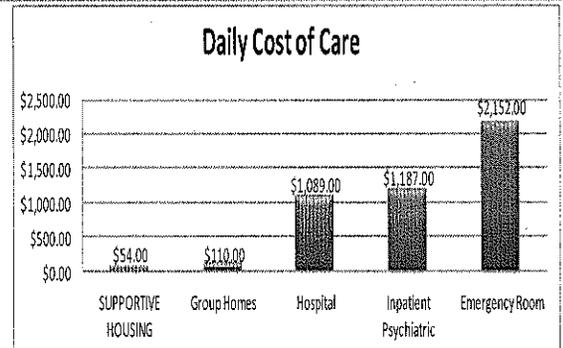
CLRP NEEDS \$490,000 TO SUSTAIN INPATIENT & HOUSING SERVICES

CLRP'S ADVOCACY SERVICES ARE COST EFFECTIVE...

Advocating for timely discharges with adequate supports substitutes community services for expensive hospital beds.

Stable housing supports the recovery of clients in the community and prevents costly emergency room visits and hospital stays.

Without CLRP's services, the State would spend much more serving clients in expensive settings.



CLRP's staffing level has already been reduced from twenty-two to seventeen through attrition and layoffs. There has been a two year salary freeze AND monthly furlough days, in addition to pension and benefit cuts.

FURTHER CUTS WILL DEVASTATE THE PROGRAM!!!

For more information, contact Jan VanTassel at (860) 262-5042 or jvantassel@clrp.org

"We with disabilities either physical or mental are reassured knowing that we have the Connecticut Legal Rights Project, Inc. behind us. Thank you." A.K. and J.M.



"I was very frightened with my Section 8 challenge. And I was also scared because this type of serious stress can/does bring on psychiatric consequences. The wonderful way I was treated helped lessen my fears. It is that special care and the understanding of how this affect one like me (bipolar) that make CLRP so wonderful. I am very grateful. Thank you" - C.K.



CLRP represented more than 40 tenants living in a condemned building in Wilimantic. Threatened with eviction and potential homelessness, CLRP negotiated interim housing arrangements, permanent apartments and rent assistance subsidies for our clients.

"I want to thank CLRP for the supportive and speedy way they handled my case. I am so grateful that CLRP exists. It made all the difference for me. Without this free service, I would not have had the courage to stand up to the housing authority. Thanks to CLRP I am no longer homeless." J.D.F.



"The service I received went well above anything I expected. They provided exceptional service with kindness and care and gave me more help than I ever expected." Bobbi-Jean Mitchell



"I cannot say enough about the services I received from CLRP. More people should be informed about your services. You do a great service for those that need it." -Claudia Wilson



"We got the help we needed from your staff, which definitely saved one or both of us from complete disaster in our mental illnesses. That is an enormous gift." - Bill and Alice Cuccinello

