



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

Dannel P. Malloy  
Governor

Patricia A. Rehmer, MSN  
Commissioner

**Memorandum:**

**To:** Members of the Housing Committee

**From:** Commissioner Patricia Rehmer, DMHAS

**Date:** February 28, 2013

**Subject:** HB 6366 An Act Concerning the Establishment of the Department of Housing

Representative Butler, Senator Bartolomeo, and distinguished members of the Housing Committee, thank you for the opportunity to comment in writing on HB 6366 An Act Concerning the Establishment of the Department of Housing.

The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) is in full support of the bill before you and is looking forward to the establishment of an agency that is solely dedicated to this issue. DMHAS has been a member of the Interagency Council on Affordable Housing which has been meeting for the last 6 months and developed the comprehensive plan for the new Department of Housing. DMHAS participated in these meetings and worked with other state agencies and stakeholders to insure a smooth transition of housing dollars and programs where appropriate. There are a number of DMHAS programs that will transfer housing subsidies to the new Department of Housing, but DMHAS will continue to hold and manage the service dollars which are used to assist the people we serve. These service dollars wrap around the individuals to insure they maintain stability in housing while in recovery.

There are four programs in DMHAS that will transfer the dollars used for housing subsidies to the new Department of Housing. Those programs are:

- Shelter Plus Care (federal program that provides housing subsidies to homeless individuals with in kind services provided by DMHAS)
- Enhancing Housing Opportunities (provides rental subsidies to 50 individuals with mental illness, with services remaining at DMHAS)
- Forensic Supportive Housing (provides rental subsidies to 60 DMHAS clients who have had some involvement in the criminal justice system, with services remaining at DMHAS)
- Frequent Users of Support Enhancements or FUSE (provides rental subsidies to 20 individuals who have a history of repetitive use of the criminal justice system and the homeless shelter system, with services remaining at DMHAS)

DMHAS is confident that the transfer of these housing dollars will provide for better coordination and communication. We believe that having one central location for all State funded housing programs will allow persons within our system of care to have better access to a variety of available housing options. The new Department will play the lead in the development of a statewide housing policy which will include housing options for special populations, including those who receive services from the DMHAS system. This will expand housing options to a broader range of Connecticut citizens.

We thank you for your time and attention to this matter and urge your support for the recommendations before you.