

FTR

March 11, 2013

To: CT Legislature Insurance and Real Estate Committee

From: Diane E. Kennedy

Re: **SUPPORT FOR HB No. 6612, AN ACT CONCERNING THE HEALTH INSURANCE GRIEVANCE PROCESS FOR ADVERSE DETERMINATIONS, THE OFFICE OF THE HEALTHCARE ADVOCATE AND MENTAL HEALTH PARITY COMPLIANCE CHECKS.**

I support House Bill 6612 largely due to my own experiences.

I have suffered from OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder) for approximately 40 years. When I began my career as a Presbyterian USA pastor in 1977, the Presbyterian health plan became my health insurance. There was only one exception: my pre-existing mental health problems.

Thus began 10 years of inadequate mental health care for me. My disorder was not diagnosed until around 1988. Previously, I had been medicated without any specificity. The Doctors and therapists whom I saw at my own expense, did not seem to know what was wrong with me.

Fortunately, in 1987, the Presbyterian health plan had been revised to include my mental health care. My husband had just divorced me after 10 somewhat difficult years.

The diagnosis of OCD in around 1988 made all the difference and I was put on the proper medication.

I have continued to have hills and valleys, but in general, I function very well and have recently retired from 33 years of ordained ministry. Good mental health care enabled me to live alone and work, mostly full- time for 20 years.

This is my testimony in support of the Mental Health Parity Bill.

Regards,

Diane E. Kennedy
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