



Office of the
Healthcare
Advocate
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

**Testimony of Victoria Veltri
State Healthcare Advocate
Before the Joint Committee on Veterans' Affairs
In support of HB 5754
February 19, 2013**

Good afternoon, Representative Hennessy, Senator Leone, Senator Welch, Representative Yacarrino, and members of the Joint Committee on Veterans' Affairs. For the record, I am Vicki Veltri, State Healthcare Advocate with the Office Healthcare Advocate ("OHA"). OHA is an independent state agency with a three-fold mission: assuring managed care consumers have access to medically necessary healthcare; educating consumers about their rights and responsibilities under health insurance plans; and, informing you of problems consumers are facing in accessing care and proposing solutions to those problems.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 5754. This is a critically important concept that the citizens of Connecticut owe our nation's military men and women. We have been a nation at war for over a decade, the longest period on continuous military conflict in recent history, and as such, have demanded significant sacrifices of those who have chosen to serve. With deployments frequently spanning 6 - 18 months, soldiers return from active duty to try and pick up their lives where they left them. However, this is not always an easy feat. Soldiers must attempt to step back into their careers, their family life, and society, all while dealing with the physical and emotional scars of war. While not every serviceman will need the full range of services available to them, HB 5754 contemplates ensuring that each soldier has the opportunity to learn about and access whatever services they may need in order to reintegrate into civilian life, identifying any deficiencies in the identification and enrollment of eligible servicemen and creating system that allows them to learn about and access the entire universal of available resources through one portal.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to deliver OHA's testimony today. If you have any questions concerning my testimony, please feel free to contact me at victoria.veltri@ct.gov.