

Feb 19, 2013

Good afternoon Chairs and Members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. My name is Ed Woodson, I live in Manchester, CT. I am here to testify in support of Bill No. 648, AN ACT CONCERNING AN APPROPRIATION FOR VICTORY GARDENS IN NEWINGTON. I am a Vietnam Veteran who was homeless with two teenage daughters after losing my wife in May 2010. I am here to testify to tell you how important having permanent housing and a case manager from Chrysalis Center has been for me. Having the support of the case management services has helped me to find safe affordable housing that has kept my family stable and intact, not living apart and in shelters.

My case manager from the Veterans Support Services program has helped me in so many ways. She has attended PPT & IEP meetings at my child's school to help me advocate for transitional services for my teenage daughter. She has helped us find a nice apartment in a nice neighborhood, which has been helpful when I get sick. My neighbor is nice and checks up on me. My case manager has helped to get my benefits reinstated with DSS who keeps "losing my paperwork" or cutting off my food stamps without notice. My case manager visits me in my home to "check in" with me to see how I am doing and if I need anything. She has provided many resources to assist me and has referred me to medical providers who finally diagnosed my illness appropriately, so I could get the right health care and get healthier. This has prevented the 5-10 emergency room visits I used to have before I was diagnosed correctly.

Since living in a safe, secure permanent housing and having regular support from my case manager, I have almost no visits to the ER because of increased diabetes symptoms, because I have stabilize my diabetes and Crohn's illnesses. I am able to resolve problems quicker, and I am able to maintain living independently in my own apartment. My family has remained intact because of the stability of our home environment and having a case manager who I can call on if I have a need or question.

I want other veterans and their families to have the same support services from Chrysalis Center that I have received, including community case management services. I would appreciate it very much if you considered my personal story, before making your decision to support this bill. This is a very important Bill that would ensure other veterans and their families would receive the best services possible after what they have given to support our country. Chrysalis Center has over 18 years of success in providing these services. Please vote yes to support Bill No. 648, so the veterans and families moving into Victory Gardens will have the same support and stability that I have had as a participant in the Chrysalis Center Veterans Support Services Program.

Thank you for having this hearing today and for listening to my testimony.

Mr. Ed Woodson  
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