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Testimony of  
Steven M. Kant, MD  
President and CEO, Boys and Girls Village  
Before the Appropriations Committee  
February 14, 2014

**Good afternoon, Senator Bye, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Steven Kant, M.D. I am a child psychiatrist and President/CEO of Boys & Girls Village. Founded in 1942, Boys & Girls Village has treatment facilities in Milford and Bridgeport, and is one of Connecticut's leading providers for at-risk youth and their families. The agency offers comprehensive care through our continuum of behavioral health services, educational and family support systems for children and adolescents at risk.**

**Today I would like to focus on one of our services in particular - our Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) in Milford. This facility, one of only three in the state, provides 24/7 nonhospital, inpatient psychiatric services for Medicaid-eligible individuals under the age of 21.**

**Boys and Girls Village has a 16-bed capacity, or nearly one-third of the 44 total beds available to treat this high-acuity, at-risk population in Connecticut. The children we treat are either referred to us from hospitals as a step-down or directly from EDs as an alternative to hospitalization. While a significant percent of the children are involved with the Department of Children and Families, our funding comes exclusively from Medicaid.**

**Based on our most recent 6-months of actual costs and our projected utilization revenues (at a 90-percent rate), Boys and Girls Village will suffer a loss of \$333,687 in 2014. Our current per diem rate is \$366.67. The last time we had a rate increase was in 2008, when it was increased from \$351 to \$366.67, a fraction of the cost of a hospital per diem rate, and representing a**

total increase of 4 percent over the past 6 years! The numbers don't lie; this is an unsustainable rate for the PRTFs, and yet there seems to be universal agreement among the agencies, populations and institutions we serve, that these beds and services play a critical role in alleviating hospital inpatient and emergency room logjams and serving the most vulnerable in our communities: children and adolescents.

These are extremely acute, costly cases to treat and the current rates simply don't reflect reality. Similar facilities in neighboring states, such as MA, receive an average rate exceeding \$500 per day.

Boys & Girls Village stands ready to work with the Appropriations Committee on a reasonable rate that will keep these critical cogs in our mental and behavioral health system viable. At the current trajectory, they are not viable.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

*Steven M. Kant, M.D.*

Steven M. Kant, M.D.  
President & CEO  
Boys & Girls Village  
528 Wheelers Farms Rd.  
Milford, CT 06461  
(203) 877-0300