



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

PSYCHIATRIC SECURITY REVIEW BOARD

Testimony of Justin Schechter, M.D.
Psychiatric Security Review Board
Before the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee
March 25, 2014

Good day, Senator Looney, Representative Williams and distinguished members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee. I am Justin Schechter, M.D., and I am honored to appear before you today as Governor Malloy's nominee for re-appointment to the Psychiatric Security Review Board as the Psychiatrist member.

I am been a grateful resident of Connecticut since 1981 and have lived my life here longer than in any other location. My two children have been the beneficiaries of excellent public educations and both my wife and I have had the privilege of practicing medicine in the state since the 1980s.

As my resume before you indicates, I am an Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the Law and Psychiatry Division of Yale University and have maintained board certification in both general and forensic psychiatry. I have served as Chair of The Stamford Hospital Ethics Committee for the last eighteen years. In addition, I have maintained a private practice since 1986. My familiarity with the seriously mentally ill population comes from my past work as Director of the Acute Treatment Unit at the Connecticut Mental Health Center, as Director of Outpatient Psychiatric Services at Stamford Hospital and in my service for the last eight years on the Psychiatric Security Review Board.

As the committee members are aware, the Psychiatric Security Review Board has jurisdiction over those individuals found not guilty of a crime by reason of mental disease or defect. My experience with Yale University's Law and Psychiatry Division has been particularly beneficial in appreciating the nexus between mental health and the law. I have supervised the forensic fellows working in all aspects of legal psychiatry, including risk assessments.

I have served on the Board since September 2006 and have been impressed with the careful and dedicated work of the group. While the public service commitment is significant in terms of time spent in hearings and digesting clinical information in preparation for those hearings, it is a commitment consistent with my values of public service. I am very conscious of the Board's mandate for the protection of society, and I appreciate the gravity and commitment that a Board appointment entails. I am eager to apply my experience and skills to the task.

Thank you for this opportunity. I would be happy to answer any questions that the committee may have at this time concerning my nomination to the Psychiatric Security Review Board.