

I would like to submit my concerns to the Judicial and Corrections Committee on March 5, 2015. I believe that those young people who suffer the disease of addiction should be court ordered to treatment and not jail. 53% of all people addicted to drugs also have a mental illness. Because of dual diagnosis it seems clear to me that when arrested those addicted to drugs are not responsible for what they did. People who have the disease of addiction have very poor self-esteem so labeling them felons serves no purpose. If incarcerated these people are denied treatment and perhaps the medication they need to get off drugs or for their mental illness. They are denied counseling so when they are discharged they are vulnerable to emotional distress and relapse. I believe that Connecticut should establish drug courts that will hear these cases in a different way and make more supportive recommendations. Massachusetts utilizes drug courts finding the rate of recidivism and cost low. I believe that the court should establish diversionary programs.

.Nancy Maroney