

Testimony before the State of Connecticut Appropriations Committee

March 6th, 2015

Good evening, Senator Bye and Representative Walker, & esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Thomas Burr, from Glastonbury, CT. I am a current Board Officer and past president of the nonprofit Manchester Affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. I am also the parent of an adult child who is in recovery from bipolar disorder, after 8 years' worth of repeated hospitalizations, incarcerations, and homelessness. Currently he is living on his own; he is in recovery, working full time, and doing very well.

I am here today to speak in opposition to the proposed cuts to our Mental Health safety net. I have attached to my testimony facts sheets on the items we are in objecting to, and the reasons why.

Briefly, we are OPPOSING THE CUTS TO:

- **The CT Legal Rights Project**
- **The Regional Mental Health Boards**
- **The School Based Health Centers**

Our Affiliate strongly opposes these proposed cuts; especially in light of the recommendations of the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission Report. We CLEARLY should be investing MORE into our states Mental Health System, and not LESS.

Please note that adding additional barriers to supporting people to live in the community with relevant services and supports will not address our citizen's needs AND make budget issues worse, by adding about \$1,200 PER day PER person to the state's expenses. (Refer to the CLRP Fact Sheet).

Additionally, we are supporting investments for:

- **Supportive Housing**, an evidence-based practice to protect the housing stability of persons with mental health conditions shown to reduce Medicaid expenses.
- **Support Funds for DMHAS Caseload Growth** in Proven Programs, including Young Adult Services, Inpatient Discharge Services, and Community Services to Avoid Nursing Home expenditures (Medicaid Waiver and Money Follows the Person)

IN SUMMARY: I am asking the Legislature to OPPOSE THE PROPOSED CUTS to our Mental Health safety net, and supporting investments for more Supportive Housing, and the funds for DMHAS Caseload growth.

Thank you. I will now gladly answer any questions you have.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Burr, Treasurer
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Enclosed:

DETAILED FACT SHEET ON CLRP
DETAILED FACT SHEET ON RMHBs