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Testimony before the Appropriation Committee Opposing
any DMHAS cuts on March, 6, 2015

Good evening Co- Chair Senator Beth Bye and Co- Chair Representative Minnie Gonzalez

My name is Kelvin Young and I'm a person in recovery from alcohol and other drugs. I'm also the Manager of Advocacy Unlimited's mind-body focused wellness center called Toivo. I am here opposing the DMHAS cuts in this year's budget. I worked in the mental health field for a few years now and I've seen the importance of having agencies like the CT Legal Rights Project. People who have been labeled with a mental health disorder and/or co-occurring disorder have been blatantly discriminated against on importance life needs such as housing and employment.

Another program that I'm strongly against cutting is the Regional Boards. For years the Regional Boards across CT have provided support to people with psychiatric histories. I've personally been to meetings and events where I witnessed people sharing their experience, strength and hope with the amazing power of human connection. The Regional Board provides different activities that promotes hope, wellness, strength and empowerment. Discontinuing this agency would be a disservice to the tax paying citizens.

In concluding, I truly hope you truly understand the importance of having the CT Legal Rights Project and the Regional Boards apart of the the many services this great state of Connecticut provides to the people we serve.