

*Testimony Submitted to the Human Services Committee:  
March 5, 2015*

**H.B. No. 6909: An Act Establishing The Connecticut Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board**

**Good Afternoon Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, Senator Markley, Representative Wood and members of the Human Services Committee**

**My name is Billye Simmers. I want to thank you for raising House Bill No. 6909: An Act Establishing The Connecticut Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board. I am speaking in support of Bill No. 6909.**

I am a member of the current Connecticut Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Advisory Board which has been active in our state since 2004 when the Department of Social Services was awarded a Grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) specifically to establish a TBI Advisory Board and a Statewide Action Plan to address the issues facing persons with brain injury. The Statewide Action Plan is posted on the website of the CT Department of Social Services.

The Mission of the current TBI Advisory Board is: To promote the creation, collaboration and coordination of person-driven, accessible, supports, programs and services for persons with traumatic brain injury, their families and significant others.

When the HRSA Grant came to an end in March 2009, the TBI Advisory Board continued to function under the By-Laws that were established through the HRSA Grant. We have brought together representatives from various State Agencies, private providers, family members and individuals living with the consequences of TBI. The exchange of ideas and concerns has generated a greater awareness of the need for a coordinated system of supports.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health completed a Prevalence Study covering the years of 1996 – 2000. The report identified 64,000 Connecticut citizens living with TBI. Subsequently DPH completed an incidence report that noted the average annual incidence of 2,300 persons suffering a TBI.

TBI is not like a broken bone that heals after a few weeks. The consequences of TBI last a lifetime.

There is a great need for increased awareness and prevention programs across the communities in Connecticut. Prevention is the only cure for TBI.

Approval of House Bill 6909 will ensure that the appropriate stakeholders will continue the conversation.

If I can be of further service, please contact me.

Phone: 203-525-2725

Email: [Billie.simmers@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Billie.simmers@sbcglobal.net)

Thank you for your time.