

YALE UNIVERSITY
School of Medicine



5/6/15

Written Testimony for the
Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Health and Hospitals

Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

I am writing along with a great many of my colleagues to urge the Governor to reconsider his recently proposed budget cuts to The Connecticut Mental Health Center (CMHC), and to the state legislature to stand up for those in our communities with the least resources among us. I am calling for the preservation of funding for the clinical and research activities of CMHC. Senior members of the Department of Psychiatry at Yale University School of Medicine have already made clear and compelling financial arguments why these proposed budget cuts make little sense, and actually will cost the state considerably more money than it would save should they make the mistake of carrying them out. Our chairman Dr. John Krystal, MD, has underscored that the money used to fund clinical and research activities at CMHC has paid for itself many times over in state tax dollars and bringing industry and innovation to the state of Connecticut. As a clinician working with this population, I would add to those sentiments the consistent research finding that fellow citizens suffering mental health illnesses put less of a financial strain on state tax monies, attributable to less frequent hospitalizations, when receiving regular services, than if without. There is no financial calculus in which these budget cuts make financial sense. Moreover, how both local and state governments choose to take care of those members of our community with the very least – those without homes, without food and without money, without the psychological and social resources that many of us take for granted – is a moral issue. How we as a state choose to care for those weakest citizens among us is a litmus test for how healthy the body politic of Connecticut is. Passage of a cut such as this, which makes no financial sense and even less moral sense, would constitute nothing less than a self-inflicted wound, and signal to the rest of the state and nation of Connecticut's cynicism when confronted with the realities of what it means to live in community; namely that we are all fundamentally bound up in each other's well being or lack thereof. To pass such senseless cuts would be not only to endorse a grave prognosis on the state of Connecticut's future health and well being, but to contribute to it as well.

Please preserve funding for clinical and research activities at CMHC!! We are counting on you! With thanks for your time and consideration,

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