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

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This is my testimony concerning the proposed budget cuts to the Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee, and it is my hope that this testimony will convey my concerns and aspirations for the future of Psychiatric Research at the Connecticut Mental Health Center.

It is my professional observation that the level of research conducted at this facility is unparalleled, and that the CMHC provides unique resources for both basic (molecular) and clinical researchers. To maximize the advancement of mental healthcare, there must be synergy between clinical science and basic research, and the CMHC offers this special opportunity. With the proposed budget cuts, not only would the synergy would be lost, healthcare research will be setback tremendously.

In addition to providing infrastructure for healthcare and basic research, the CMHC provides for unique opportunities for trainees who will be the next generation of scientists or clinicians. The proposed budget cuts will have detrimental effects on all of these aspects.

It may be unclear to those who designed these cuts that previous State funding of the CMHC has actually enabled the acquisition of Federal grants that are crucial to our research. The resulting Federal money brought in to the CMHC is many times higher than that invested by the State.

It may also be unclear that certain Federal rules and regulations of "how" grant money may be spent, prohibits usage for various aspects of research (such as indirect costs), which are nonetheless critical for research. The money provided by the State fills this need, as we cannot use Federal funding for this.

The State of CT is facing a deficit of 89-100mil. The proposed budget cuts to the CMHC will not only barely put a dent in this deficit, it will cause harm to the local community, increase unemployment,

and inhibit progress in the mental healthcare field. I understand the need for fiscal responsibility by the State, however it is my thoughts that these budgets cuts are shortsighted and will not actually promote the desired effects of the Appropriations Committee. I strongly urge the Committee to consider the long-term effects and to rethink these cuts. The money provided by the State to the CMHC should be considered an investment, rather than a line item cost to be wantonly discontinued.