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Good evening distinguished Committee Co-Chairs and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Annette Deonarine and I am a Hartford resident and today I am submitting testimony to express my opposition to ANY cuts to the DMHAS budget. The State of CT is facing many difficulties as well as some tough decisions during the upcoming fiscal year. However a budget that will practically close the doors of agencies that help persons with psychiatric histories and addiction issues is not the answer. Connecticut Legal Rights Projects and the Regional Mental Health Boards are important to our communities and the persons we help, advocate and serve. In my community many persons who have struggled with many issues, e.g. housing, discrimination, medical interpreting services provided have been serviced by these agencies. I am deeply concerned should these persons have nowhere to turn if they are unable to speak for themselves in a platform many of us take for granted. Let's move forward in continuing to support persons with psychiatric histories, not backwards.

It is important that their funding isn't affected by the cuts proposed. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,  
Annette Deonarine