

Please enter this written testimony into the record for the public hearing on the Governor's proposed budget for the Dept. of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and the Dept. of Public Health (DPH), **this Friday, March 6, 2015 starting at 4:30 PM** in Room 2C of the LOB, 300 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT.

**Connecticut Prevention Network:** If the \$736,000 proposed cut is implemented as proposed, the RACs would be eliminated as well as contribute to a negative ripple effect on all communities. The Connecticut Prevention Network (CPN) is an association of the state 13 community partnership Regional Action Councils (RACs) connected to all 169 Connecticut communities. RACs mobilize communities and provide education, training and advocacy to reduce substance abuse and promote mental health wellness.

**Regional Mental Health Boards:** \$584,000 cut would eliminate the Regional Mental Health Boards. With an average of 2 full-time staff each, they mobilize over 500 volunteers collectively. The board's collaboration help bring in \$23 million dollars in federal funds to the state. For 40 years these unique agencies have been a vital liaison between the state, local communities, and service providers to assess needs, evaluate services, and educate communities on a diverse range of mental health initiatives, concerns, and opportunities.

With mental health issues and public health scares more prevalent than ever (The Newtown shooting and the Ebola scare are only the most prominent examples), now is NOT the time to cut funds for these vital agencies that do so much prevention work. The cost that our communities will have to bear if these cuts were implemented are likely much higher than the anticipated savings.

Please keep the budgets for the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the Department of Public Health intact.

Sincerely,

Reini Knorr  
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