
March 3, 2015

Public Health Committee
Room 3000, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Attn: Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee

Re: Testimony in **Support of Proposed Bill 5058 – AN ACT CONCERNING SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT**

My name is Lorrie McFarland, and I am the Prevention Coordinator of BHcare's, Greater Valley Substance Abuse Action Council (VSAAC). VSAAC is also an active member of the CT Prevention Network (CPN). I am writing this testimony in support of Proposed bill 5058 in which the legislation seeks to expand substance abuse treatment options.

- This bill seeks to prohibit licensed substance abuse treatment facilities from limiting admission to persons **currently** under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

I strongly support this bill for the following reasons:

- As a community referral resource, I often have desperate parents on the phone looking for substance abuse treatment for their child. It is counter-productive to have tell them that their child must be actively under the influence in order to get them the help that they need.
- Adults who have the courage to call and seek help for prescription medicine abuse are directed to our nearest hospital emergency department while high in hopes that they will be admitted to a treatment facility.
- Frustrated caregivers wait for weeks for any treatment provider to call and say they have an opening for their substance abusing loved one – thus putting that person at risk of overdose, or, withdrawal as they manage on their own.

Our community is noted for having an increased problem of prescription medicine abuse among adults, while the number of students with marijuana dependency rises. Treatment must be available and timely so that these lives are not lost due to a senseless "limitation".

Respectfully,


Lorrie McFarland