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Tuesday, February 09, 2016 12:09 PM
AppTestimony
Julie Peters
Testamony for Brain Injury Alliance of Connecticut

February 11, 2016

Appropriations Committee Public Hearing Testimony

Maryann McGuire, 41 Cumberland Rd. West Hartford, CT

Good Evening Chairpersons and Members of the Appropriations Committee. I am submitting this testimony in opposition to THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS. In his proposal, the Governor seeks to reduce or eliminate funding for important core services of the Department, including funding for the Brain Injury Alliance of Connecticut.

In 2012, my 16-year-old son sustained a brain injury during high school basketball practice. He was not one of the 80% who move from the injury event through a period of symptom resolution, to a return to full normal activities. He was one of the 20% of concussions who move to a complex recovery known as post concussion syndrome. It altered every facet of his academic, social and emotional life. He spent months in a dark room to hide from the pains of fogginess, headache and light sensitivity. He went from being a three-sport varsity athlete and high school sophomore to a boy in pain. I personally witnessed a lack of knowledge among school officials, friends and colleagues. By no means did they mean to cause harm they just did not understand how to manage a student with a concussion. I became my son's advocate and expected nothing less than responses from school and health care to be evidence based and effective in meeting his needs. It was no easy task. I am a health care professional and had the knowledge and access to research to find the guidance. This is an impossible task for the majority of people. Consequently, that means our students with brain injuries are not always being managed properly for the most successful recovery. Over the last few years, I became acquainted with the team at BIAC and how they can assist in finding care, services and support. The staff cares and is driven to support each person with a brain injury and their family. I know this because I am now a member of their board. BIAC is out in the community, in schools, workplaces and health care systems to educate on preventing and managing brain injuries. Each day, we learn more about the long-term effects of brain injuries and concussions. BIAC is Connecticut's organization to assist in the prevention and management of brain injuries and concussions. The health care delivery system cannot absorb the work done by BIAC. We need BIAC to continue their function as Connecticut's leading agency on brain injuries and concussions.