

March 17, 2016

Legislative Offices  
Hartford, CT

Greetings to my esteemed State Representatives,

My name is Virginia Adams and I am a woman in long term recovery from alcohol and other drugs. I have not needed to use a substance since September 30, 1992 which puts me in my 23 year of recovery. Being in recovery has afforded me the opportunities to give back to my community and advocate on behalf of those who cannot advocate for themselves. I am writing in because I strongly oppose Bill # 5531: In voluntary Outpatient Commitment Bill.

Many years ago I might have been a candidate for a law such as this one but I can assure you that the FORCEFUL provisions in this bill would not have made me seek out recovery any sooner than I had. I needed to come to the conclusion that active addiction was ruining my life and I actually had a life worth living. There were many times during my active addiction where someone suggested treatment, I however was not ready to engage with treatment professionals. Even the kindest of suggestions drove me further into my denial and usage, had someone forced me into treatment at that time I truly believe I would have ran or risked getting arrested. You see, you could not have forced me to get this thing called recovery; it was a realization I had to make on my own. Once I accepted that I had a serious problem and that help was available I became a willing participant in my own recovery. Reflecting back on my active days had I been mandated to treatment I would certainly have run the risk of losing what little I was able to maintain ie: a job, custody of my son, housing, dignity but most of all my constitutional right to choose the treatments of my choice, the medications of my choice.

Yes, I strongly oppose the passage of this bill as for many like me RECOVERY should be a choice and not FORCED, the use of force is not helpful but can prove to be more harmful to the person who struggles with addiction. Lets think about using the monies and resources that would be allocated to such a bill to more treatment and treatment options for people. Lets think about providing treatment on demand, so that when a person is ready we have resources ready and available to meet that person wherever they are at. We know treatment works for those who want it!

Thank you for your consideration

Virginia Adams  
New Britain, CT