

**Testimony before the Appropriations Committee**  
**H.B. No. 5044 AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO STATE EXPENDITURES FOR**  
**THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2017**  
**February 18, 2016**  
**Teresa Doudera, Willington CT**

Good evening Senator Bye, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Teresa Doudera and I live in the town of Willington. I am writing this testimony concerning H.B. No. 5044, An Act Making Adjustments to State Expenditures for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017

I am opposed to any cuts to the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and any mental health services and supports.

I go to United Services in Willimantic to see my Psychiatrist and my Therapist. I regularly attend both a Wellness and Interpersonal Skills group. With this help I am healing, connecting, learning to grow and become empowered to make decisions for myself.

I go to a Vocational Counselor at United Services to help me figure out my strengths and weaknesses enabling and supporting me to find a job.

I go to the Lighthouse Program weekly to eat a healthy lunch, do volunteer work and connect with members there. I learn about wellness and support other members there. It feels safe and welcoming at the clubhouse. The Lighthouse has a group membership to Super Future Fitness. I work out at this gym with the Lighthouse group twice a week. This keeps me motivated and improves my self-esteem and wellness.

When a person with a mental illness is in crisis he or she can call Emergency Services at United Services to get help. Emergency Services saves lives. In addition keeping all these services funded and available provides needed supports and opportunities for people to overcome depression and plans to attempt suicide.

Many people with a mental illness go through a lot of stress when they hear a budget cut is going to happen. Many are fragile and the added worries of not receiving services makes them depressed. We are in recovery and want to learn to overcome our mental illness. Many of us don't fight it when we hear about budget cuts, but we are still entitled to good housing, medical care and enough income to buy good food. Everyone is important and should be treated equally. Treatment for mental illness is important and it is just as necessary as medical treatment. It should therefore be funded just like any other medical care is funded.

Thank you for your attention to my testimony and please work to preserve these necessary supports and services in my community.