

**Testimony Before the Appropriations Committee
on Governor's proposed Midterm Budget adjustments FY 2017
IN OPPOSITION
H.B. No. 5044 AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO STATE EXPENDITURES FOR
THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2017
Re: Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) Budget
February 18, 2016**

Brenda Kingsley, Putnam, Connecticut

Good evening Senator Bye, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Brenda Kingsley and I am a registered voter in the town of Putnam. I am thyroid cancer survivor. I am proud to say that I am 65 years old. I walk very well with my cane. I go to a gym regularly to improve my health. I am here to testify on 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 DMHAS budget and any mental health services and supports. With the mental health services that I receive, I am able to live a better life. My mental health symptoms are under control with my medications. The supports that I receive that I find helpful are:

Day Kimball Hospital: I receive individual and group therapy which helps me resolve my concerns before they become bigger problems.

United Services: I have case management services that helps me to remain Independent in elderly housing. My case manager helps me to complete all the forms that I receive to keep my benefits in place. She helps me to set up And follow up regarding the medical appointments that are necessary for my physical and mental health. I also attend the Welcome Arms clubhouse daily for social support and to help me connect with the community. I have learned about advocacy and leadership at the clubhouse in addition to attending wellness and health groups. These services help me to be a stable person.

Recently, I discussed these proposed cuts with other clubhouse members. One member felt strongly that services should not be cut. She said simply, "Please don't take away what we need." Another member is concerned that he would lose his independence and would need to live in a nursing home, if his services were cut.

I urge you to keep critical services available to the residents of Connecticut.

Thank you for your consideration of these important services and supports.