

Testimony before the Appropriations Committee
H.B. No. 5044 - An Act Making Adjustments to State Expenditures for the FY 17
February 18th, 2016
Andrew Kellogg West Hartford, CT

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

My name is Andrew Kellogg and I reside in West Hartford.

I'm here to testify on H.B. No. 5044 – An Act Making Adjustments to State Expenditures for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30th, 2017.

I'm opposed to any proposed cuts to the DMHAS and any mental health services and supports.

I currently work as a Peer Engagement Specialist. One achievement which I pride myself in is being a certified Recovery Support Specialist (RSS) in the state of CT and from my knowledge, I'm the only deaf certified RSS. I never thought I would be in this position sitting in front of you if it wasn't for the people who work at Mental Health Connecticut's Robinson House in West Hartford for one. That is because I received services from Robinson House and they saw potential in me which I didn't see at first. With their encouragement over time, I applied for the Advocacy Unlimited's Recovery University program to get certified as a RSS which was achieved. I still maintain my RSS certification to this day and enjoy my work in peer engagement services. The clients really enjoy having me work with them since I can connect with them more intensively based on our living experiences.

I thrive in giving back what I got while being part of the Robinson House program which can't be described in just a few words.

There are other programs in Connecticut who rely a lot on funding to operate efficiently. Please know that if cuts are made, services which people in recovery value will cease then people like me will have a less shot of being successful.

I strongly urge you to keep the vital services available to the residents of CT so that others like me can continue on their path to recovery and then, in turn, help even more people.

Thank you for your service and for your attention to these important services and supports which people like me pride on to move on with.