

Testimony before the Appropriations Committee

February 18, 2016

Cynthia Williams, Waterbury, CT

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

My name is Cynthia Williams and I am from Waterbury, CT

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 mental health services, and want to express my appreciation for NAMI Connecticut and the Independence Center and how they have supported me.

Four years ago, I was viciously attacked and stabbed in my one good hand during a robbery attempt. I now celebrate being a survivor.

Without the support of these mental health services, I would not be able to address the trauma that I survived-many times in my life. Without these programs, people would just sit around in their houses and not have any place to go. This would cause people to become more depressed and end up in hospitals-which are more expensive. It makes no sense to cut mental health services and not address the needs of so many.

Please think of all the people here advocating for mental health services and know that it is only a small portion of how many are really out there.

Thank you for your time.

Cynthia Williams

Testimony before the Appropriations Committee

Angela Cassandra Benson

February 18, 2016

Waterbury, CT

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

My name is Angela Benson and I am a registered voter and live in Waterbury, CT.

I am here to testify on H.B. No. 5044 and I am opposed to any cuts to mental health services and supports.

I was first diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder, Anxiety, and gender identity disorder in 2000. I have been using the Independence Center for about six years and I feel that these services have helped me to stay out of the psychiatric hospital for almost 9 years. Taking these services away would leave me no place to go for the help to keep me out in the community. I have also used Connecticut Legal Rights Project and currently work with our local mental health board in the Consumer Action Group in Waterbury. I have helped run the meeting there on a monthly basis and feel that my input is valued for bringing the information back to consumers. All of the information pertains to mental health and how any changes can affect people receiving services.

Please do not make any cuts to mental health services, including Connecticut Legal Rights Project, or the Regional Mental Health Boards.

Thank you,

Angela Benson

Testimony before the Appropriations Committee

Vanessa McGee

February 18, 2016

Waterbury, CT

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

My name is Vanessa McGee and I am a registered voter and live in Waterbury, CT.

I am here to testify on H.B. No. 5044 and I am opposed to any cuts to mental health services and supports.

12 years ago I was out there all alone with nowhere to go and no services. I ended up at Connecticut Valley Hospital where I received services and treatment. Now I live independently in the community and worked at Wendy's for five years and have good doctors.

If you decide to cut the budgets, all of the services I have, including services at the Independence Center would not be available to me, and I probably would end up back in the hospital.

Please consider my requests, do not cut mental health budgets.

Thank you,

Vanessa McGee