



#### **TESTIMONY OF**

**Thomas J Steen, Executive Director, Capital Area Substance Abuse Council and Member of the Connecticut Prevention Network**

#### **H.B. No. 5044 AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO STATE EXPENDITURES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2017.**

*Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services- Regional Action Council Funding  
February 18, 2016 Appropriations Subcommittee on Health Public Hearing*

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Gerratana and Representative Dillon,

My name is Thomas J Steen and I am the Regional Action Executive Director for the Capital Area Substance Abuse Council (CASAC) which serves the towns of Avon, Bloomfield, Canton, East Granby, Granby, Farmington, Hartford, Hartland, Newington, Rocky Hill, Simsbury, Suffield, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor, and Windsor Locks. On behalf of the Connecticut Prevention Network (CPN), I am here today to strongly oppose the grave cuts to regional action councils that will decimate the current prevention network structure.

#### **IMPACT:**

The current proposal could equate to almost 80% cut which would mean most of the RACs would be unable to survive such a drastic cut including CASAC.

#### **WHAT WOULD BE LOST?**

- Community mobilization and grant collaboration
- Substance abuse awareness, education and prevention initiatives such as opioid prevention activities
- Behavioral health awareness and promoting the use of Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to treatment.
- Mental health and suicide prevention awareness and training
- Media advocacy, program development, legislative advocacy
- Leverage funds for local initiatives and conduct fundraising activities to fill gaps
- Community needs assessment with surveys, data collection and trainings
- Develop a biannual epidemiologic report of substance use/abuse and recommendations for changes to the community environment

**Solution:**

The Connecticut Prevention Network requests the proposal being considered be rejected and maintain the current structure and funding level.

**We urge you to reject the severe budget cuts to regional action councils and keep in place the current CT Prevention Network structure.**

Thomas J. Steen, Executive Director  
Capital Area Substance Abuse Council  
200 Day Hill Rd. Suite 120  
Windsor, CT 06095  
tsteen@casac.org  
www.casac.org