



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES
A Healthcare Service Agency

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

Miriam Delphin-Rittmon Ph.D.
Commissioner

Memorandum:

TO: Members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Commissioner Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, DMHAS

DATE: February 29, 2016

SUBJECT: Written Testimony on Senate Bill 213

Senator Coleman, Representative Tong, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee: thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on SB 213 AN ACT CONCERNING THE INHERITANCE RIGHTS OF A BENEFICIARY OR SURVIVOR WHO IS FOUND NOT GUILTY OF MURDER OR MANSLAUGHTER BY REASON OF MENTAL DISEASE OR DEFECT.

This bill seeks to prohibit a person found not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect of causing the death of the deceased from benefiting from the estate of the deceased or from the deceased's life insurance policy or annuity

The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services has concerns with the bill as written. In the tragic situation that a parent is killed by an adult child with serious mental illness, and the parent's actions and intent have for years been to support the child who is ill and try to do the best that the parent can for that child, under such circumstances, this bill would preempt the clear wishes of the parent that the adult child be supported by whatever means the parent had available. We have working closely with the Office of the Victim's Advocate in the past to address this issue. We ask that you consider amending the bill in such a way as to make allowances for family circumstances such as these.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to weigh in on this important topic.