



CONNECTICUT
LEGAL
RIGHTS
PROJECT, INC.

TESTIMONY OF KATHLEEN FLAHERTY, ESQ.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CT LEGAL RIGHTS PROJECT
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING 3-2-2016

SUPPORTING: HB 5455

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and members of the Public Health Committee:
Good morning. My name is Kathy Flaherty and I'm the Executive Director of Connecticut Legal Rights Project (CLRP), a statewide non-profit agency that provides legal services to low income adults with serious mental health conditions. I live in Newington. CLRP was established in 1990 pursuant to a Consent Order which mandated that the state provide funding for CLRP to protect the civil rights of DMHAS clients who are hospitalized, as well as those clients who are living in the community. I'm also the Vice Chair of the Keep the Promise Coalition (KTP). KTP is a coalition of advocates (people living with mental illness, family members, mental health professionals and interested community members) dedicated to ensuring that a comprehensive, community mental health system is created and sustained for children, adults and families in Connecticut. I also served as a member of the Governor's Sandy Hook Advisory Commission.

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House Bill 5455 would establish a task force on patients' medical records. Existing statutes already establish patients' rights to access their medical records. I would ask this committee to recognize the various reasons why a patient may need copies of her medical records, and consider requiring appointment of other patient advocates, in addition to the proposed representative of the Connecticut Trial Lawyers' Association.