

Marcelino, Pamela

From: Sacco, Valerie <SaccoV@chc1.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 11:29 AM
To: INSTestimony
Subject: Bill HB 6887

Testimony before the Insurance Committee

HB 6887 - An Act Expanding Coverage for Mental Health Care Services and Substance Abuse Services in FAVOR of the bill
February 16, 2017

Valerie Sacco

Good morning, Senator Kelly, Senator Larson, Representative Scanlon, and distinguished members of the Insurance Committee:

My name is Valerie Sacco and I am a resident of Middletown. I am here to speak on HB 6887, An Act Expanding Coverage for Mental Health Care Services and Substance Abuse Services.

I currently am working as Middletown's Young Adult Peer Support Specialist through the CT STRONG grant (through former president Obama's NITT-HT initiative) and am proud to share our successes with Peer Services. Based on our research through UCONN, we have increased employment, decreased incarcerations, youth homelessness, and decreased the number of psychiatric-related hospitalizations, just to name a few. By covering care coordination, case management, and peer support services to the community, we will be saving the insurance companies money (as well as hospitals, detention centers, etc.) as well as increasing support for citizens in Connecticut. The cost for insurance companies to cover these services are much cheaper than hospital stays, intensive outpatient therapies, and can be used in conjunction with psychotherapy.

In my own experience as a young person living with a mental health condition, I know I would have benefited from peer services and care coordination. There is nothing more beneficial than speaking to someone who can identify with and understand what it is like to live with PTSD, Bipolar Disorder, OCD, etc. and by expanding coverage for this type of service, it will offer more hope and help prevent tragedies like the Sandy Hook Shooting.

I am in FAVOR of the bill and fully support the expansion of coverage for Mental Health Care Services and Substance Abuse Services.

I urge you to support important services for people with mental health and/or substance use disorders.

Thank you for considering my perspective.

Valerie Sacco, RSS

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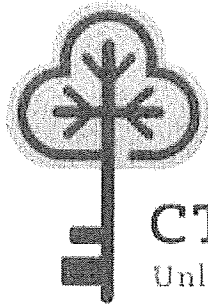
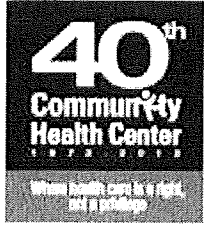
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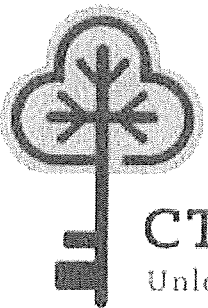
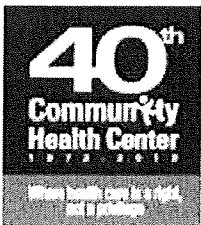
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