The Connecticut Psychiatric Society supports Raised Bill 7091, An Act Concerning the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services’ Recommendations regarding Revisions to The Professional Assistance Program for regulated Professionals.

This bill makes clear that a diagnosis of a mental illness or behavioral or emotional disorder is not equivalent to an offense for which one has been arrested, nor does it justify the statutory assumption that such a diagnosis automatically impairs the professional’s ability to perform his or her duties.

Such a scheme is plainly discriminatory to people experiencing mental illness. This discrimination is especially concerning given that one in four adults will experience a diagnosable mental illness in any given year, and that as a matter of public health, we should be encouraging all citizens to seek professional help in treating such illness.

The Connecticut Psychiatric Society continues to advocate for the elimination of stigma and discrimination related to mental disorders. Such stigma certainly has no place in an enactment of our General Assembly.