Senator Formica, Senator Osten, Representative Walker, ranking member Representative Ziobron and other Members of the Appropriations Committee, I am writing on behalf of the patients with a severe mental illness who depend on the available treatment resources at Connecticut Mental Health Center.

I started working as a research assistant at CMCH in 2005 after graduating college. I quickly realized that the research and clinical resources at CMHC and its unique relationship with Yale have led to the development of improved treatments for mental illnesses. During my time at CMHC, I had the opportunity to witness an unprecedented level of collaboration between basic science researchers, clinical researchers, and clinicians working together to improve the treatment and care for patients with suffering with debilitating mental conditions. It was during my work at CMHC that I decided to go to medical school and become a psychiatrist and follow the footsteps of my mentors and dedicate my career to developing better treatments. The work at Ribicoff Research Facilities has continued to serve as a bedrock both for training future leaders in the field of psychiatry, producing numerous departmental chairs, world-renowned scientists and exceptional clinicians, and research that has led to an improved understanding of the pathophysiology of mental illnesses and several novel pharmacological treatment strategies. After graduating residency, I enthusiastically returned to work at CMHC to join efforts in combating the burden associated with mental illnesses.

I emphasize that the proposed DMHAS budget cuts will severely undermine the decades of collaborative hard-work at CMHC: research opportunities to develop treatment and further understanding of these debilitating illnesses will diminish, CMHC’s vital educational mission to train clinicians and researchers will be compromised. This undoubtedly will have a devastating impact on the patient’s lives and their families who depend on the CMHC to for treatment resources.

In conclusion, I hope that my testimony unambiguously emphasizes the significance and impact of the work being done at CMHC. Thus, I sincerely urge the members of the Appropriations Committee to see the value of the work at CMHC and restore funding so we can continue serving the people in our community.