Testimony before the Appropriations Committee

March 5, 2019

Joseph J. Cintia, Waterbury CT

HB 7148: AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR

THE BIENNium ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2021, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS

THEREFOR. (DSS Budget)

To implement the Governor’s budget recommendations.

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Joseph J. Cintia and I am a registered voter in Waterbury, Connecticut.

I have suffered with mental health issues since I was 17. In 1999, I was sent to a group home due to homelessness and surviving a suicide attempt. The budget wants to cut 10 public group homes. A paltry savings of $553,000 in the budget is the stated reason. This seems to underscore the lack of respect there is for mental health needs of our citizens.

I cannot put a dollar amount on the suffering of our citizens. I suppose with the budget shortfalls and the debts left by the previous administration, mental health is an easy budget to cut, since the clients have no strong lobbying presence.

I have had to go to DSS for aid, and having private oversight would simply prolong assistance and perhaps not even save any money, but simply fulfill some “businessman” reputation for Governor Lamont. Privatization sounds like something his opponent Stefanowski might have done.

Every year, I see my DSS cash cut, in the amount of my SSI COLA. I suppose this somehow saves money. The harm it does to the needy, notwithstanding. I wonder where these “savings” go? To Scrooge and Marley, LLC?

The chains that bind, bind the tightest on tightwads that make mankind a liability and gold the only asset! Please make humanity your business, here in the public sector.

I urge you to keep valuable services open for residents, citizens and voters here in Connecticut.

Thank you for any help you can provide, and for your attention to these important issues for me and other needy citizens and voters.