Testimony before the Appropriations Committee
March 1, 2019

HB 7148: AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENIUM ENDING JUNE 13, 2021 AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.

Karen Wilkie

Good evening Senator Osten, Rep. Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Karen Wilkie and I am a registered voter from Waterbury, CT. I am here to testify regarding H.B. 7148 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET

I am a member of Mental Health Connecticut’s Independence Center. This is the only Mental Health Service I receive. If it were not for the center, I would be lost and have no support. I have severe Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Dissociative Identity Disorder with returning depression. The support of my counselor and other staff and groups I attend really help me in my recovery. I actually thrive at times through the Mending Arts program and love the exposure to various guest speakers that promote hope and recovery.

Mental Health Connecticut does so much to enhance the lives with persons with multitudes of labels, yet sees the person.

Young adult services can get youth the help they need when they need it, and not go years in foster care, hospitalizations, reform school, prison and other negative experiences. I speak from my lived experience on the above. My hope is that eventually there will be no more Karens (me) coming through the system that is ill fit to meet the needs of trauma survivors, that keeps them in the victim-survivor stance and not thrive to have a whole productive and healthy life.

Again, I am asking you not to cut funding for the private-not-for-profit agencies.

Thank you for listening to me.

Karen Wilkie