Good evening Senator Osten, Rep. Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Tammy Ives and I am a mentor at the Lighthouse, a part of the United Services.

In the 29 years that I’ve been a member of the Lighthouse and United Services the population of people attending both places has rapidly increased. Due to the lack of mental health funding, we are not able to keep up with the current growing membership.

There is a constant worry about the services being closed due to the staff shortages. The organization has currently closed some of the services and clubhouses due to the budget cuts.

There is more money for other parts of the organization than there is in the northeastern part of Connecticut, meaning there is a larger client to staff ratio. It is very critical for all of the services to remain open in the northeast due to the increase of the population of people with mental health problems.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my testimony.