Testimony before the Appropriations Committee
HB 7148 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNium ENDING
JUNE THIRTIETH, 2021, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.
March 1, 2019
Brenda Kingsley

Good evening Senator Osten, Rep. Walker and members of the
Appropriations Committee:

My name is Brenda Joyce Kingsley. I am a registered voter from the town of
Putnam. I am here to testify to tell of my journey with my mental health.
With the mental health support I’ve received, what a difference now with the
life I am living.

In the past four years on going and me not thinking of myself as a person
with no self-worth, not even human dignity, or even thought of as a decent
human being. Going to therapy for mental health was hard to open up and
talk about how I was feeling and what was happening to me in my life.

With much coaxing and strongly urging me to go, I went to the clubhouse to
be with other people.

Going to Welcome Arms clubhouse, the staff and members thinking and
dealings with me, that I was a better person. I did not think that much of
my own self. Mostly when I was there I always wanted to be there to help
another if I could. They saw in me what I did not see in my own self.

Going to repetitive mental health therapies helped me open up and talk my
problems out, to make the connection and not let it stay inside and what
was building up inside me. I still did not have the trust I should have, but
the staff at Welcome Arms, the therapist and APRN were saying I was much
more mentally healthy than I have been in years.

My mental health has improved from the past. I could talk it out in therapy
sessions, talk to the therapist about what was going on in my life, things
happening to me that causing me problems in my life, any kinds of cruelties,
abuse, things done to me that were not right. The therapist gave me advice
for myself so I could have a better life to live.

Down the road I joined the new In Shape program and that opened my eyes
to eating healthy and the importance of walking and exercise.
Further on in my journey I go to healthy eating groups, a program of United Services that teaches us about foods that we are eating and learn to control eating habits to create a new mindset of thinking.

Our social club is now a wellness program. I still belong and we meet at sites to be with staff and members for socialization and group or activity we might be doing at the time. We are not sitting inside a building all day long. Being able to meet members, getting together and talking, not where we are left with no staff and no social get-togethers, left me with a good feeling inside. I felt better than before and was feeling better about my own self. When I was having good feelings inside, I was able to do better and deal with whatever comes up in a day as it comes, all because I went to the new wellness program. The Welcome Arms clubhouse is no more, but we are still here.

What happens to a person in their life, sometime people decide that they want nothing to do with the person at all.

Today, I have testified in Hartford. This is my fourth time. I sing in the choir, I go to church. My eyes were open. I do not date. I am single. I enjoy life, family and friends; they enlighten me to a whole brand new life to live.

I belong to Midtown Gym and the YMCA. The wellness group has a new peer staff that started January 3rd. January as a group we will be going to the YMCA on Mondays and Tuesdays. I have been meeting at the sites with the new wellness program. I go to United Services health eating groups on Fridays. I talk everything out, no matter what, in my therapy session. And know with the new changes being enlightened, the road for my life is what I want to be on.

Thank you.