Governor’s Proposed Budget FY20
Appropriations Hearing: Department of Social Services
Tuesday, March 5, 2019

Senators Osten, Formica; Representatives Walker, Lavielle; and all Members of the Committee:

Thank you for reading my testimony today in support of the Medicaid Supportive Housing Benefit through the Department of Social Services to assist high need high cost Medicaid beneficiaries who are experiencing homelessness in accessing and retaining stable housing and meaningfully engaging with their health goals.

My name is Caitlin Rose, and I am the Special Projects Program Manager for New Reach, Inc., a non-profit that provides services to over 2,000 clients a year across the full spectrum of housing interventions to homeless individuals, youth and families throughout Fairfield and New Haven counties. Many individuals that we serve need a higher level of care than just housing, and we know that a continuum of housing resources is what our state needs to be able to respond to the unique needs of each and every homeless constituent.

Connecticut was one of eight states selected through a competitive process to participate in the Medicaid-Housing Partnership Innovation Accelerator Program. Through this initiative technical assistance was provided to help Connecticut design ways to support individuals served by Medicaid in accessing and retaining stable housing and engaging with their health goals. Under this proposal, a 1915(i) state plan home and community-based services benefit will be developed to provide supportive housing to up to 850 individuals who experience homelessness and whose average Medicaid costs exceed $40,000 per year. After factoring in the federal share, this proposal is expected to reduce total Medicaid expenditures by $2.7 million in FY 2020 and $13.9 million in FY 2021.

While Connecticut is leading the nation with their cutting-edge interventions, we are not done yet. Please continue to fund these imperative programs; the outcomes of these programs inevitably save the state money and are an investment in a stronger and healthier future for all Connecticut residents. I urge you to support the Medicaid Supportive Housing Benefit through the Department of Social Services to assist individuals served by Medicaid in accessing the supportive housing needed to maintain stable housing and improve their overall health outcomes and well-being.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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It is the mission of New Reach to inspire independence for those affected by homelessness and poverty through a continuum of housing and support using the most innovative and progressive methods.