

Insurance and Real Estate Committee  
February 27, 2020

Testimony in Support of:

*H.B. No. 5248, H.B. No. 5254, An Act Establishing A Task Force To Study Health Insurance Coverage for Peer Support Services In This State.*

*H.B. No. 5254, An Act Requiring Health Insurance Coverage For Medication-Assisted Treatment For Opioid Use Disorder*

*H.B. No. 5256 An Act Concerning Required Health Insurance Coverage For Detoxification And Substance Abuse Services*

Co-Chairs Scanlon and Lesser; Vice Chairs Dathan and Hartley; Ranking Member Pavalock-D'Amato and Kelly; and distinguished members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee:

*My name is Rachael Morrissey.*

*I have been affected by this epidemic, I have a 25 year old sister in rehab and most recently lost my 20 year old brother. My brother failed a suicide screening at New Milford Police and was released without any contact to my family. Before that my brother had been in and out of rehab. The last rehab he was in when he was leaving, he called my parents crying because he knew he was not ready to leave. The rehab facility was making him leave because the insurance company would no longer help him pay for it. Although he had been addicted for years, it wasn't something he did everyday, it was a once in awhile thing, but one day he just hit rock bottom. He completed detox and outpatient programs but knew he wasn't ready to come home yet. He wanted to stay and get more help but was denied. My brother was trying so hard to become healthy again to enjoy the time with his family, his friends, his fiance, and daughter. After being released from the program he immediately found a job, he was working on becoming sober and staying sober. Then one day he relapsed, was arrested and failed a suicide screening that New Milford police gave him. That same day he died. When I got told he had passed, I couldn't believe it. My heart shattered into a million pieces right there. I wake up everyday hoping that it was just a nightmare. August 10th 2019 will always be one of the worst days of my life. I miss my brother dearly and I wish there was a way I could talk to him, laugh with him, just one more time, one last good memory. My brother was only 20 years old with a two year old daughter and a daughter on the way. He had a hard working job, he was trying so hard to be a great man. He was an amazing big brother. He was always there for me to talk to when I needed to. The only thing I have left is the memories of the car rides when he needed a ride or when our parents asked us to go to the store when we were on vacation. We have so many great laughs and memories, that our family and I miss so much. He asked for help and yet the insurance companies and police gave up on him. Just ask anyone that knew him, he was amazing and he was a great father. He is missed and loved dearly. He left a legacy!*

*I am urging you to consider these bills to ensure insurance companies are required to provide help to those seeking services and to utilize MAT as a standard form of treatment, the data suggests this is one of the most successful ways to help those recovering from addiction.*