

**Testimony of NAMI Connecticut
By Lisa Winjum, JD
Executive Director
Before the Insurance and Real Estate Committee
February 27, 2020**

In support of: H.B. No. 5256 - AN ACT CONCERNING REQUIRED HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR DETOXIFICATION AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES.

Senator Lessor, Representative Scanlon, and members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee; I am Lisa Winjum, the Executive Director of the Connecticut State Office of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI Connecticut). NAMI is the nation's largest mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. NAMI Connecticut has been providing support groups, education programs, and advocacy for people, including children, affected by mental illness for 35 years.

NAMI Connecticut (NAMI CT) envisions a world where all people affected in any way by mental health conditions experience the best possible quality of life and where mental health is accepted as an integral part of overall wellbeing.

We support **H.B. No. 5256: AN ACT CONCERNING REQUIRED HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR DETOXIFICATION AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES**

Mental Illnesses often coincide with substance abuse disorders. In the face of an overwhelming opioid epidemic in Connecticut these services should be covered by health insurance. The ready availability of these services will save lives.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Lisa B. Winjum, JD
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