

**Testimony Before the Human Services Committee
March 4 , 2021**

**PUBLIC HEARING RE: HB6446 AN ACT CONCERNING THE GOVERNOR'S
BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HUMAN SERVICES.**

WILLIAM ACOSTA

Bridgeport, CT

Hello, Sen. Moore, Rep. Abercrombie, and members of the committee. My name is William Acosta, and I am from Bridgeport. I come before you today to address **HB6446 AN ACT CONCERNING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HUMAN SERVICES**, which includes implementing an asset test for the Medicare Savings Program.

I would like to take just a moment to say “thank you” to you, the chairs, and members of this committee for all of the hard work that you do day after day to do right by your constituents and the citizens of this state who represent so many varied interests and agenda. I am a proud voter and I plan to continue to be a proud voter.

I serve as Housing and Advocacy Coordinator at Bridge House in Bridgeport. Bridge House is a nonprofit psychosocial rehabilitation day program—or more commonly known as a Clubhouse program—that serves adults, *or clubhouse members*, living with mental health conditions. The vast majority of our members rely on disability income and health benefits to manage their lives from day to day.

The Governor’s budget proposes instituting an asset test for the Medicare Savings Program. So many of our citizens who are seniors or are disabled rely deeply on these programs. So deeply, in fact, that they can ill afford to have an asset limit imposed on their already-meager income. These programs literally sustain life for lower income elderly and disabled individuals who cannot afford to pay additional costs if they surpass the proposed asset limit of \$15,720 for individuals and \$23,600 for couples.

Granted, many of the members whom we serve at Bridge House have incomes that are below these limits, which renders them just barely able to make ends meet at any given time. Yet there is a number of members who have disability incomes above those limits who cannot be overlooked with an assumption that they are able to pay additional costs to help pay for their health coverage.

I appeal to your conscience; to your vision; to your compassion, and I respectfully request that the proposed reinstatement of the asset test—be challenged and avoided.

Thank you again for your time and for the opportunity to provide this testimony.