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**Testimony of Kimberly L. Beauregard, LCSW,  
President and CEO, InterCommunity, Inc.**

*Re: H.B. 5055- H.B. No. 5005 AN ACT ADJUSTING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30,  
2021  
Concerning*

**Department of Social Services Budget- Detox Funding**  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Human Services Public Hearing, February 19, 2020

Senator Osten, Representative Walker and Members of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Human Services, my name is Kimberly Beauregard and I am the President and CEO of Intercommunity Inc., the state's largest detox provider and a federally qualified health center look alike serving over 11,000 people a year throughout Northern Connecticut and the Hartford region.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony regarding the critical need to increase the Medicaid reimbursement rate for detox services.

InterCommunity runs the largest detoxification in Connecticut. Our 35-bed unit provides 24/7 support to people taking the first step in overcoming their opioid, alcohol, or benzodiazepine addiction. InterCommunity provides this life saving service to all in need regardless of their ability to pay. Each client is assigned to a counselor and they receive individual and/or group counseling daily. Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous meetings are offered onsite five evenings a week. Referrals for continuing treatment are encouraged and arranged prior to discharge. The goal is to safely detox clients from alcohol and/or drugs and to provide education and motivation for referral.

Despite being the largest provider of detox services, our Medicaid reimbursement rate and grants are not providing sufficient funding and are jeopardizing the long-term stability of our detox program.

InterCommunity's detox reimbursement rate is \$342.83 for Medicaid, which covers 87% of our detox patients. This is despite the cost of care being \$452 per bed per day to operate. Additionally, 9% of our clients either have Medicare, which does not cover detox beds at our service level, or do not have any insurance. Overall, this leaves only 4% private pay and therefore limits any ability to make up for the significant losses from Medicaid, Medicare and uninsured patients.

We are the only true safety net provider for detox services since again, we accept people in need 24 hours a day 7 days a week, regardless of their ability to pay. However, the Medicaid losses and lack of ability to cost shift makes this unsustainable. Without an increase in our Medicaid rate or additional grant dollars, we will be forced to limit our intakes or make other decisions.

This would be unfortunate since the need for detox services has never been greater. Despite the increased attention to opioid overdoses, according to the Chief Medical Examiner Connecticut accidental intoxication deaths jumped 18% to hit a record high 1,200 in 2019.

Unfortunately, too many residents are not getting the services they need in a timely manner. And despite the significant deaths that have resulted, detox providers like Intercommunity have not seen a rate increase.

I would urge this Committee to address the inadequate Medicaid reimbursement for detox services and prioritize this service so we can continue offering vital detox and substance abuse services for some of the most vulnerable people in the state.