



SEIUHealthcare®
United for Quality Care

February 21, 2020
Leah McGennis, Clinician
United Services
SEIU District 1199 New England
Before the Appropriations Committee

Good Evening Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Committee, my name is Leah McGennis. I am a Clinician that has worked for United Services for 7 years. I got into this work because I have witnessed firsthand how helpful therapy has been for the people in my life. I wanted to make an impact and offer other help that I have firsthand knowledge to be beneficial.

I love the work that I do, but our programs are completely short staffed. Many programs have closed due to the inability to fill positions. Clients have left the program because they have not been able to see me enough. We cannot waitlist people. When new clients come in we have to see them, but because we are short staff, there are very few clinicians to meet with clients. That causes us to see our clients less often, resulting them leaving the program.

Treatment plans take up a large portion of the session. It consists of me sitting in front of my computer while the client is there, while I work on a plan shortening my face to face counseling. That leaves us less time to work towards the actual treatment.

I'm being asked to do more and more work with less compensation. Often times, I am not able to meet deadlines for required paperwork. The higher the case load, meaning the riskier the client, the more paper work and collateral contact I have to do. Many times I have to stay late without pay to finish paperwork.

My stress levels have risen. The amount of work I have to do on the day to day basis have taken a toll on me. I have developed chronic pains and digestive issues due to the stress. I am no longer emotionally available for my friends and family. I need help.

Please support mental health funding in Connecticut. We are at a crisis point in Connecticut. If we don't invest in mental health in Connecticut, we will never recover as a State.