

## TESTIMONY OF CARMEN ARROYO

My name is Carmen Arroyo. I currently live with my son, Mikhail Arroyo in an apartment in Willimantic. I appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of the Connecticut Fair Housing Center's work in representing the victims of housing discrimination.

I contacted the Connecticut Fair Housing Center in 2016 because I was trying to bring my son, Mikhail, home to live with me. Mikhail suffered an accident in 2015 that left him essentially unable to walk, speak, and care for himself. After more than six months in the hospital, he was transferred to a nursing home. When he was ready to be discharged, I asked my landlord to transfer me to a two-bedroom apartment so that he could be added to my lease. My landlord performed a background check on Mikhail using a third-party screening company called CoreLogic. When the results came back, the landlord told me that Mikhail was not eligible to move in with me because of unspecified issues that surfaced during the background check.

I sought the Center's help in determining why my son was not eligible to move in with me. The Center's staff spent many hours and wrote several letters and emails trying to figure out why my landlord would not allow Mikhail to live with me. We found out that he was denied because CoreLogic screening report said he had a "disqualifying criminal record" without any information about what was in his record. It turned out Mikhail had been charged with minor shoplifting in 2014. He was never convicted, and the charge was ultimately withdrawn. My son was not a threat to anyone before or after his accident, but the landlord refused to let him move in with me because of the screening report. He was in the nursing home for an extra year, depressed and ready to come home. The Center helped me file a

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complaint against the landlord, and we have since filed a lawsuit against the CoreLogic, an ongoing case that has already established several important legal precedents. Because of the Center's involvement, the landlord agreed to overlook Mikhail's criminal record and he was

finally able to come and live with me. Since coming home, his physical condition has gotten a little better and he is no longer depressed. We love watching television together and sharing a meal. None of this would have happened if the Connecticut Fair Housing Center had not helped me with my case. I am grateful for the Center's assistance and ask the legislature to continue to support their work in the future.