

President, Board of Directors:
Jack Malone



Chief Executive Officer:
Carrie Dyer

Testimony before the Appropriations Committee, Health Subcommittee, regarding:

H.B. 6439

AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTEENTH, 2023, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR

Public Hearing Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at 10:00 am

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, Representative France and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Carrie Dyer. I am a registered voter in the town of Ashford and am the CEO of Reliance Health, Inc. Our organization is primarily funded by the Connecticut Departments of Mental Health and Addiction Services and Developmental Services. I wish to share comment with regard to H.B. 6439.

Our agency provides a wide variety of services to individuals who navigate mental health, substance, and intellectual challenges. We have provided these services since 1976 and have grown and adapted to the needs of our community. We are creative, optimistic, and nimble. Sadly, we have been forced to use that skillset to cope with neglectful funding patterns.

Since 2007, the nonprofit sector has had flat funding. That is 14 years – half of my career – of no increases to account for inflation, insurance premiums, technology demands, housing expenses, and the overall cost of doing good business. Ironically, we hold three leases with the State of Connecticut for properties where we provide residential supports. The state, citing escalating administrative costs, raises our leasing fee at each renewal. Yet our State of Connecticut funding does not increase; thus, reducing resources to support the individuals living in those homes. It is absurd.

This is not my first time testifying on this topic. I could have copied and pasted from my previous testimonials, but clearly, they weren't effective. Nothing changed. I have struggled to decide how to put words to my frustration. This pattern is not only illogical but insulting. Our contracts, unlike our State counterparts, have been frozen in time yet we are expected to meet the increased expenses and demands without question or complaint.

Each year, we are told that we are valuable; that we are essential; that we are the safety net. This year I ask you to prove it. Advocate for us. Treat us with the dignity and respect that we so readily provide to our communities.

Thank you for your time.



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