



Advocacy and Action
for Connecticut's
Mental Health

**Testimony before the Appropriations Committee
March 2, 2021
DMHAS BUDGET HEARING
H.B. No. 6439 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE
BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2023, AND MAKING
APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.
Lynn O. Evans**

Good Morning. Sen. Osten, Rep. Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee

My name is Lynn Evans and I am a 67-year-old woman and a registered voter in Manchester, CT.

I am here to testify regarding The DMHAS budget and requesting increases over the next few years to enable vulnerable communities to stabilize after this pandemic.

I have been a member of Common Ground Social Club and Learning Center for 9 years. I am also a proud member of Inter Community Healthcare and Keep the Promise Coalition organizations. I have struggled with my mental health for most of my life, but the members of Common Ground have become my friends and have helped me to get through my life struggles. During the COVID-19 pandemic, I unfortunately came down with COVID-19, and was in and out of the hospital and nursing home for weeks. Without the access of telehealth groups provided by Common Ground staff and other providers, I would not have been able to survive and get through this difficult time. I am a Covid survivor.

I feel that without the services provided through Inter Community, it will negatively affect my mental health and change my life for the worse. I please ask that you do not decrease the budgeting, but I ask you to increase the funding for the non-profits like InterCommunity to provide supports and services for the mental health community. They need housing supports and CT needs to increase funding for Supportive Housing and rental assistance. Everyone who needs community support services is on a wait list for help. These services help connect people in need with resources like, food, shelter, employment services, and assistance with getting vaccine

registration as well as detox programs and socialization supports like Common Ground who help this population with coping skills. This year has been very difficult, and more people will be needing services and supports in CT.

I am also asking that DMHAS fund 5 Peer Respite in CT one per DMHAS region. We need alternative supports for people in distress. Peer Respite are free, voluntary and staffed with trauma informed trained peers.

I thank this committee for their service and listening to my story.

A concerned citizen, Lynn Evans