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United for Quality Care

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Earl Givan
Young Adult Services (YAS)
DMHAS
District 1199NE
Before the Appropriations Committee

Good morning Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Committee, my name is Earl Givan and I am a member of 1199. I work in the South West Connecticut Mental Health Services (SWCMHS) Young Adult Services (YAS) in Bridgeport. I am here today to ask for funding for DMHAS to support housing services in YAS.

YAS used to have a 16 hour step down residential program for our young adults who didn't need 24 hour level of care. This program focused on helping the young adults gain a level of independence so they could live out on their own. It created a sense of security for the clients knowing there was staff to assist them if needed and it also created a sense of independence being able to go out on their own to take care of their personal responsibilities. The site had staff from 7am to 11pm to provide support for clients if needed. Clients would check in with the staff to coordinate any support needed for that day. The site had six individual apartments and a staff apartment that was used for respite if needed.

Since the 16 hour program was cut it has been very difficult to assess clients level of care. Clients movement of level of care has stalled. Clients are being moved out of the community when they are not ready to live on their own. Hospitalizations have increased due to the lack of support that the 16 hour site offered. The attendance in programming has declined. The clients who are moved out in the community too early tend to lack the ability to maintain their daily schedule so you see a decline in use of case management, employment, education, and any other wraparound services.

I ask again that you fund YAS services like the 16 hour step down residential program because they are so important for our clients. Thank you for your time.