

**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 30, 2023 AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS**  
**THEREFOR**  
By William C. Jackson

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

My name is William C. Jackson and I am a registered voter in the City of Bridgeport.

I am here to testify regarding the budget for the next fiscal year for the Department of mental Health and Addiction Services, **H.B. No. 6439, An Act Concerning The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June 30, 2023 And Making Appropriations Therefore.**

I remember first stepping through the doors of Bridge House like it was yesterday. It was the summer of 2017, and I was referred to this great organization by a former therapist who noticed that I was becoming isolated in my home. I had no job, no real friends, and I did not know what I was going to do with my life. I have been diagnosed with Major Depressive Disorder with psychotic features, and I have done two stints in the psych ward, once in Connecticut, and once in my native New York City.

In the almost four years I have come to Bridge House, I have made many friends, and I feel that I have a purpose. I work in the Business Unit, where my skills have been put to good use. I worked a transitional employment job at the Bigelow Center for Senior Activities in Fairfield, which I really enjoyed, and now, I am back in school online, earning a Master's Degree in Creative Nonfiction Writing.

Were it not for Bridge House, I would still be isolated, and lost in my life. This organization means a lot to me, and countless others. Please keep the funding for

mental health at its current levels, or increase the levels of funding, so that people such as myself can utilize Bridge House and other great services within our various communities.

Thank you for your time and attention.