

**Written Testimony of John H. Krystal, MD regarding  
HB 6439, An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium  
Ending June Thirtieth, 2023, and Making Appropriations Therefor**

*Appropriations Public Hearing on the Governor's Proposed  
FY 2022-2023 Budget for Health Agencies  
Tuesday, March 2, 2021*

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee, thank you for your unwavering dedication and commitment to the needs of the people of Connecticut suffering with mental illness and substance use disorders. As Chair of the Yale Department of Psychiatry, it is my great honor and privilege to collaborate with DMHAS Commissioner Miriam Delphin-Rittmon in overseeing the unique and enduring State-University partnership known as the Connecticut Mental Health Center (CMHC). My comments will be brief, as I primarily want to thank you for your steadfast support for CMHC funding within the DMHAS budget and to highlight the critical programs and services made possible because of the State's ongoing support.

CMHC continues to play a critical role as the lead safety-net provider of treatment for individuals with chronic disabling mental illnesses and addictions in the New Haven area. Beyond its local community role, CMHC is also a statewide resource. CMHC patients come from more than half of Connecticut's cities and towns. CMHC houses unique programs that have a statewide impact. For example, the STEP Program for young people with new psychosis symptoms, La Clinica Hispana, for Spanish-speaking patients, and our Forensic Psychiatry Programs that work at the interface of mental illness and the legal system. Our clinical research unit is a tertiary care facility where those who are not helped by existing treatments are offered the latest breakthroughs in investigational treatments.

Faced with the enormous challenges posed by the pandemic, CMHC has continued to serve the community, albeit in modified ways, while carrying out its research and training functions. CMHC's leadership team, together with the Commissioner, has provided two videoconference briefings for members of the legislature about how we are meeting these challenges. These briefings will continue at regular intervals and on an as needed basis to address questions or concerns raised by members of this body.

CMHC is educating and training the next generation of CT's psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric nurses, clinical social workers and other healthcare professionals. We attract the best and brightest of those aspiring to enter our field from around the world. This year we had 1200 applicants for 16 residency positions. State support for this mission is further augmented by grants from the National Institutes of Health and from research foundations.

As you have heard me say in my prior testimony, Yale continues to support CMHC's development of new treatments through ongoing investment in the infrastructure and physical plant of the basic science research facility and through its substantial annual support for faculty

from endowment funds. The State's annual support for research at CMHC is vital for covering expenses that cannot be supported by federal grants. Thanks in large part to this support, we continue to be the top Psychiatry department in the country in terms of extramural grant support. As a result, our grants will return over \$1.0 M in overhead cost recoveries to the State General Fund this year, covering most of the State's annual investment. CMHC research has been a magnet for investment in Connecticut, drawing Pfizer's Clinical Research Unit to New Haven, across the street from CMHC. In a recently released study commissioned by the City of New Haven and reported on in the New Haven Register, Ninigret Partners cited neuroscience as a key driver of the city's future economy and specifically cited CMHC as an important resource. For example, CMHC research programs have spun off companies including Neurogen, PsychoGenics, Spring Healthcare, and Biohaven pharmaceuticals. Biohaven, located in New Haven, debuted in May, 2017 and now has a total value of \$2.6 B.

In conclusion, CMHC remains a critical community and state resource, a national model for clinical innovation, and an engine for the Connecticut economy. Thank you for recognizing its importance to the citizens of the State and for your continued support for CMHC and DMHAS funding.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Krystal". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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