

**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.**

**Susan Maxwell**

Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Susan Maxwell and I am registered voter from Waterbury Connecticut and attend Mental Health Connecticut's programs.

I am here to testify regarding H.B. No. 6439 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2023, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR

I am testifying today asking you to increase the funding for non-profit mental health programs. In the past year I have not attended Mental Health Connecticut's programs such as the Independence Center because of Covid-19, but I do talk to my counselor at least twice per week, attend workshops over the phone and get a weekly food delivery, which is really a blessing. During this pandemic I have been sketching and drawing to help get through these times. I have struggled at times, and look forward to when things open back up. When that happens, the Independence Center will be bombarded with people because the center has been closed for so long and the support of the staff of the Independence Center is still needed. I run into a lot of our participants while walking downtown and they all say they miss the Independence Center! Thank you for reading for testimony.

I respectfully request that the committee support the following proposals and expansions from the Governor's budget for the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS):

- I support the proposed budget for the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services' Housing Supports and Services line at \$23.4 million in each year of the biennium.
- I request a new targeted investment of \$2.25 million in the DMHAS' Housing Supports and Services line to provide supportive services to 300 households in scattered-site and development units.
- I request \$375,000 in new funding in the DMHAS' Housing Supports and Services line for enhanced outreach services that would enable us to better identify individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

I support the Governor's proposal to provide an additional \$4 million in FY22 and \$7.2 million in FY23 in DMHAS for continued discharges from Connecticut Valley Hospital, including 30 new Money Follows the Person placements.

- I request the addition of \$352,500 in each year of the biennium for wrap-around services for 47 individuals anticipated to receive federal HUD Mainstream vouchers during FY22.
- I support the CT Community Nonprofit Alliance proposal to restore \$461 million over five years to community nonprofits. Funding for nonprofits, including those working to end homelessness, does not adequately cover increased costs and demands for services.

Thank you for listening to my testimony today.