

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
Jordan A. Smith

Good evening Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the appropriations committee. My Name is Jordan Smith 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 am currently a mental health generalist at Bridge House, a psychiatric rehabilitation program that currently receives 90% of its funding from DMHAS dollars. As a staff member I have been able to see firsthand the impact that this level of funding along with the time, effort, and dedication from staff can do to change the lives of the people we serve. With this combined effort Bridge House has not only been able to keep its doors open through the pandemic, but we have also been able to pivot and provide new and necessary services to our members. We have expanded our virtual presence to provide online programming through Facebook Community groups and Zoom collaborations. We have expanded our food bank operations to include the delivery of orders to Bridgeport, Stratford, Trumbull, Fairfield, Westport, Norwalk, and Milford. In addition to these great things we were also able to deliver 300+ hot meals to the homes of our members between Thanksgiving and Christmas! None of this would have been possible without the vision, leadership and dedication of staff and members. More importantly, none of this would have been possible without the financial backing to do so. The money we receive as a part of the DMHAS budget is truly being put to good use and changing lives one at a time. I ask that as you consider changes to the budget you also consider increasing funding to Bridge House and programs like ours that have been able to do a great and tremendous work with the financial backing that comes from this budget. I thank you for your time and consideration and hope that we all continue to operate in the best interest of the people we serve.

Thank you for listening to my testimony today.