

PA 11-064

SB0852

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**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**PUBLIC
HEALTH
PART 1
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**2011
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COMMISSIONER PATRICIA A. REHMER: Good morning, Senator Stillman, Representative Ritter and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee. I'm Commissioner Pat Rehmer of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and I am here this morning to speak in favor of two Bills before you, Senate Bill 852, Concerning Supportive Housing and Senate Bill 883, Concerning Various Revisions to Statutes Concerning the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. And I want to thank the committee for the assistance in raising these bills.

HB 5045

The first bill that I'll speak to is Senate Bill 852, Concerning Supportive Housing. And what we're asking is to make changes to the DMHAS Supportive Housing statutes so that they could conform to existing practices.

We currently have 1280 units of permanent supportive housing state wide with another 110 in developmental stages.

The bill would add the Department of Corrections and the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch to the Interagency Workgroup, it would eliminate confusing references to the Next Steps and Pilot initiatives and it would delineate the development components from the scattered site components of the supportive housing model.

The supportive housing initiatives in Connecticut have been a critical component of our recovery efforts and we appreciate the support this legislature has given us throughout the years.

We would like to suggest one simple change in the legislation before you. The Interagency Group would appreciate if you would add the

word permanent before the word supportive housing initiatives throughout the statute. Those words were used in the previous statute and we inadvertently left it out in the drafty we sent to the committee.

The next bill is Senate Bill 883, which is Concerning Various Revisions to Statutes Concerning the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. This statute would make a series of technical changes to the DMHAS statutes.

We propose to eliminate all references to Cedarcrest Hospital. The Department has received written acknowledgment from the Department of Public Health's Office of Health Care Access regarding the Department's full compliance with the applicable provisions of the settlement agreement to terminate psychiatric inpatient services at Cedarcrest Hospital.

January 6, 2011 is the effective date of termination and as part of that process just to let you know we've successfully moved over 50 individuals from Cedarcrest and other DMHAS inpatient unit facilities into the community.

The bill would also create the addictions division of Connecticut Valley Hospital to accurately reflect the addition of Blue Hills Hospital into the administration of CVH and the general psychiatry division to reflect the longer term care division for persons with serious psychiatric disabilities.

This bill would also eliminate references to the Community Mental Health Strategic Investment Board, which has not met in over two years, has completed its original functions as well -- and then we also are

JAMES MCGAUGHY: Good morning or good afternoon I guess.

Senator Stillman, Representative Ritter, Members of the Committee, my name is Jim McGaughy, I'm the Executive Director of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities.

I have submitted written testimony of three of the bills that are on your agenda today. I don't intend to read them. Our office generally supports Bill Number 885, which is a bill that Mr. O'Meara just talked about allowing volunteer agencies access to the -- to the registry and Raised Bill 852, CONCERNING SUPPORTIVE HOUSING INITIATIVES.

But what I really wanted to talk about was Raised Bill 6279 which is -- which is the bill that revises many of the DDS statutes and changes the language that -- particularly the references to the term mental retardation substituting the term instead intellectual disability.

And I can only echo the Commissioner's comments on that, that resentment over what, in the advocacy community has come to be called the R-word, retarded is really building and has been for some time. I think it reflects the personal experiences of many people who have been taunted or who have experienced put-downs and who have been given that label by -- clinically.

But it also reflects awareness that the vernacular has adopted that term as a general pejorative that is fairly frequently heard in the halls of high schools around the state and so forth. And so the adoption of the term intellectual disability is generally speaking

appreciate action on the bill. And I thank you so much for all your efforts.

REP. RITTER: Thank you.

And we are ready to start the public portion of the hearing. And on -- as I had said before, we will take the bills in the order in which they are listed on the agenda and speakers in the order in which they have signed up.

Our first bill is Senate Bill 852, AN ACT CONCERNING SUPPORTIVE HOUSING INITIATIVES.

Our first speaker will be Dominique Thornton. And I would like to remind all of our speakers that -- to limit their comments to three minutes. And you will hear the bell follow by -- probably an interruption if you fail to hear the bell.

Thank you very much.

DOMENIQUE THORNTON: Good afternoon, Madam Chairman, members of the Public Health Committee. I don't believe I'll even take three minutes to tell you, my name is Dominique Thornton, I'm from the Mental Health Association of Connecticut and I'm here to support Bill 852.

I understand it's just a quick fix and you're allowing the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to expand the supportive housing initiatives that have already begun, that these can be more appropriately done with other departments as well. This is an excellent initiative and one which we support. It will save the state money and it will allow people to live in the community with support.

Now I have to tell you, this new system that you have, I hope everyone got my testimony because I submitted that testimony after the earlier announcement this morning.

So if it's working I'm completely paperless, I don't even have a copy of my own testimony but I hope you do because it was submitted this morning after the announcement and I said, well I'm going to -- I'm going to try that and because no one else was here to support this bill and it's a really good one. So thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much, it's a pleasure to see you again Dominique and we appreciate you brevity --

DOMENIQUE THORNTON: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: -- and most importantly your support.

Are there any questions?

Yes, Doctor -- oh gosh, if I saw it I could probably pronounce it; Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN: Yes.

REP. RITTER: Thank you.

REP. SRINIVASAN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Your most operative word that was music to my ears was; save the state money.

DOMENIQUE THORNTON: Yes.

REP. SRINIVASAN: That was phenomenal to hear. Could you elaborate on that as to how this is going to save the state money, if you -- I

want to hear a little bit about that.

DOMENIQUE THORNTON: Absolutely.

REP. SRINIVASAN: Thank you.

DOMENIQUE THORNTON: The last year the State had the opportunity as I think you heard earlier to close Cedarcrest Hospital; hospital costs -- inpatient costs for persons who have psychiatric disabilities range in the neighborhood of \$1,200 a day versus community services which can be provided with permanent supportive housing in which the services are wrapped around the individuals allowing them to reside in community can vary. It can vary from \$15,000 to \$20,000 a year to possibly as much as -- as much as \$70,000 a year but still \$1,200 a 365 days in a year would mean -- at \$1,000, \$365,000 a year versus \$15,000 to \$20,000 -- \$70,000 or \$80,000 per year in permanent supportive community health. And that's for one person.

REP. SRINIVASAN: Thank you very much. But I just want to make sure we're comparing apples and apples.

DOMENIQUE THORNTON: Yes.

REP. SRINIVASAN: And the level of service that was being provided as an inpatient in a hospital setting is comparable to what we are going to be providing them in a -- in a community service. Thank you.

DOMENIQUE THORNTON: Well if the individuals require hospital level care then they would not be appropriate but so frequently people are placed in nursing homes and other facilities because there is no other place to put them. And that's -- that's the issue.

You -- you already went down the road of money follows the person, I -- I believe the governor has announced yesterday that he is expanding the way the Medicaid delivery system is handled to increase money follows the person so that more people who are able to be served within the community can do so and benefit from that. That's going to be a big savings on the Medicaid side of the budget. And people like it too; they want to be in their own homes if they can be.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, sir.

Anyone else have any questions for Dominique?

DOMINEQUE THORNTON: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you so much.

Is there -- we don't have anyone else signed up under Senate Bill 852. Is there anyone else who would like to speak to this particular bill? Very good, you got your chance.

okay. Moving on to House Bill Number 6278, we have one person signed up; Lynn Warner.

A reminder you have three minutes, the bill goes off but you will not fall through the floor. We'll -- but we might --

LYNN WARNER: I appreciate that, thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much and welcome.

LYNN WARNER: Thank you, Senator Stillman, members of the Public Health Committee; I am Lynn Warner the Executive Director of The ARC of Connecticut, a 59-year-old statewide advocacy

HB 6278
HB 6279
SB 885



Service, Education, Advocacy

Contact: **Domenique Thornton** at (860) 529-1970 extension 11

Good Morning, Chairman and members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Domenique Thornton. I am the General counsel and Director of Public Policy for the Mental Health Association of CT, Inc., (MHAC). MHAC is a 100-year old private non-profit dedicated to service, education and advocacy for people with mental health disabilities. Thank you for the opportunity to tell you why I support Senate Bill 852 An Act Concerning Supportive Housing Initiatives. This initiative updates the role that DMHAS already has to support individuals in a creative and supportive housing model making individuals more independent of costly institutional services for life saving support. This initiative puts the force of law behind a concept that has worked successfully in the past and should be replicated as a model to leverage federal, local and private resources. Many persons get stuck in an institutional revolving door that prevents them from having productive lives in the community with appropriate services. With the appropriate level of services, persons with severe and persistent mental illness can recover, live with hope, improve their lives and thrive in the community. .

For over 100 years, Connecticut has maintained a well-intended system of institutional care for persons experiencing serious and persistent mental health disabilities. Ten years ago, the state closed two of its three psychiatric facilities and promised to provide community services to support people released from institutional care saving the state millions of dollars. The alternatives for people with very low income and with chronic illnesses are extremely limited. Even those who do not want to go back to the institutional environment, fail without the supportive services ending up in an expensive revolving door. Last year the state was able to close another state hospital. I think you should also consider that up to 20% of the prison population may be able to successfully and more economically benefit from community support. Please consider housing as one of the most effective public health care expenditures you can make. Housing provides the stability upon which all mental as well as physical health recovery depends. Vulnerable people with chronic diseases recovering from substance abuse and psychiatric disabilities **Please give this excellent policy, the force of law by passage of Senate**

Bill 852. It will also help rebalance state Medicaid dollars to cost effective community service which is a state priority for humanitarian as well as economic reasons. Thank you.

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
February 9, 2011

*Susan Whetstone, Interim President-Executive Director
Connecticut Housing Finance Authority*

Raised Bill No. 852 AN ACT CONCERNING SUPPORTIVE HOUSING INITIATIVES

Chairman Stillman, Chairman Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Susan Whetstone, Interim President-Executive Director of the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA). On behalf of CHFA, I am providing my *support* of **Raised Bill No. 852, AN ACT CONCERNING SUPPORTIVE HOUSING INITIATIVES.**

CHFA was created in 1969 by the State Legislature to help alleviate the shortage of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income families and persons in Connecticut, and when appropriate, to promote or maintain the economic development of the State through employer-assisted housing efforts.

The purpose of this legislation is to clarify the scope of "Supportive Housing Initiatives" cited within current state statutes in order to allow for increased coordination among our partner agencies.

Supportive housing is designed to create permanent, affordable, service-enriched housing opportunities for individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, particularly persons experiencing chronic, repeated or persistent homelessness.

This legislation appropriately adds the Department of Correction and the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch to the list of collaborative partners. In all, **Bill 852** encourages a greater degree of partnership across public agencies so that we may continue to develop quality supportive housing throughout Connecticut.

CHFA is pleased to endorse this legislation, and I thank you for the opportunity to provide my comments.



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH**

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

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**Testimony of Stephen N. Ment
Public Health Committee Public Hearing
February 9, 2011**

Senate Bill 852, An Act Concerning Supportive Housing Initiatives

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the Judicial Branch in support of Senate Bill 852, An Act Concerning Supportive Housing Initiatives. The bill, in part, adds the Judicial Branch's Court Support Services Division (CSSD) to the list of entities that the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) will collaborate with in order to establish supportive housing initiatives.

Under existing law, the Supportive Housing Initiative provides CSSD clients, who have serious mental health needs, with affordable housing and support services. While the Judicial Branch currently collaborates with DHMAS and other state agencies in supportive housing initiatives, we welcome the opportunity presented by this bill to codify and solidify this relationship.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of this bill.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES
A Healthcare Service Agency

DANNEL P. MALLOY
GOVERNOR

PATRICIA A. REHMER, MSN
COMMISSIONER

**Testimony by Patricia Rehmer, MSN, Commissioner
Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Before the Public Health Committee
February 9, 2011**

Good morning Sen. Stillman, Rep. Ritter, and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee. I am Commissioner Patricia Rehmer of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and I am here this morning to speak in favor of SB 852 An Act Concerning Supportive Housing. I want to thank the Committee for your assistance in raising this bill.

SB 852 An Act Concerning Supportive Housing would make changes to the DMHAS Supportive Housing statutes so that they would conform to existing practices. We are proud to say that we currently have 1280 units of permanent supportive housing statewide with another 110 in the development stages. This bill would add the Department of Corrections and the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch to the Interagency Workgroup, it would eliminate confusing references to the NEXT STEPS and PILOT Initiatives, and it would delineate the development components from the scattered site components of the supportive housing model. The supportive housing initiatives in CT have been a critical component of our recovery efforts and we appreciate the support this legislature has given this program throughout the years. We would like to suggest one simple change in the legislation before you. The Interagency Group would appreciate it if you could add the word "permanent" before the words "supportive housing initiatives" throughout the statute. Those words were used in the previous statute and we inadvertently left it out in the draft we sent to the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee on this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have at this time.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY FOR
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
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Testimony of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities
Before the Public Health Committee

Presented by: James D. McGaughey

Executive Director

February 9, 2011

Good morning and thank you for this opportunity to comment on several of the bills on your agenda today.

Our Office also supports Raised Bill No. 852, AN ACT CONCERNING SUPPORTIVE HOUSING INITIATIVES. Supportive Housing models enable people who, for a variety of reasons, have difficulty maintaining a stable household to do just that – maintain a stable home. The primary problem with supportive housing is that there is not enough of it. The bill would expand the number of agencies whose clients could potentially benefit from supportive housing. Ultimately, however, the number of people who will actually benefit depends on resources that will be invested.

Thank you for your attention. If you have any questions, I will try to answer them.

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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2011**

**VOL.54
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8965 – 9294**

law/lxe/jr/fst/gbr
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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June 7, 2011

which is Senate Bill 888; Calendar 570 which is Senate Bill 1201; Calendar 542 -- I'm sorry. I don't have the bill number. Is Senate Bill 863. And Senate Bill -- I'm sorry, Calendar 632. SB 1098

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative, you want to check Calendar 542. I believe it's --

REP. SHARKEY (88th):

Yes, 542 is -- pardon me, is Senate Bill 852.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Very good, thank you, sir.

REP. SHARKEY (88th):

So I move these onto the consent calendar. We'll be having some other bills that we're going to be adding to that consent calendar shortly once we adopt the amendments, and then we can vote on those.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, Representative.

REP. SHARKEY (88th):

Thank you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Cafero.

REP. CAFERO (142nd):

I just want to make sure the board there is straight,

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June 7, 2011

THE CLERK:

What page is it on?

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Clerk, please call Calendar 592 which is the
beginning of the Consent Calendar.

SB 863 SB 1201

SB 852 SB 888

SB 377 SB 1216

SB 1003 SB 371

THE CLERK:

On page 32, Calendar 592, Substitute for Senate Bill
Number 858, AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE HIGHER
EDUCATION STATUTES.

SB 1112

SB 881 SB 1076

SB 518 SB 1098

A VOICE:

Mr. Speaker, this represents the Consent Calendar,
and I would move that we vote on it as such.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

There's a Consent Calendar. Staff and guests,
please come to the well of the House. Members take their
seats. The machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call.
Members to the Chamber. The House is voting the Consent
Calendar by roll call. Members to the Chamber.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members
voted? Please check the roll call board. Make sure your
vote's been properly cast. If all the members have voted,

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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June 7, 2011

the machine will be locked. The clerk will please take a tally. Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

On today's Consent Calendar:

Total number voting 139

Necessary for passage 70

Those voting Yea 139

Those voting Nay 0

Those absent and not voting 12

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The Consent Calendar's passed.

Any announcements or introductions?

Representative Piscopo.

REP. PISCOPO (78th):

Good morning, Mr. Speaker. For a general rotation.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. PISCOPO (78th):

Will the general please notes that Representatives Kokoruda and Noujaim missed votes ue to you illness in the family. Representative Rigby missed votes due to business in the district. Will the transcript please note that Representatives Candelora, Wood and Williams

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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2011**

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2086- 2336**

rgd/md/gbr
SENATE

94
May 20, 2011

SENATOR GERRATANA:

Mr. President, if there are no objections I would ask that this be placed on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, thanks to the cooperation of the minority we have another item to place on consent at this time, and that was the next item that we had previously marked go, calendar page 26, Calendar 51, Senate Bill 852. If that item might be placed on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE CLERK:

Calendar page 29, Calendar Number 122, File

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SENATE

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Number 5558, Madam President, move to place that item on the foot of the calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

And one additional item, Madam President, calendar page 45, Calendar 452, Senate Bill Number 1059, Madam President, move to refer that item to the Appropriations Committee.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

And Madam President, if the Clerk would call the second consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

SENATOR LOONEY:

One additional item. Excuse me. And one additional item, Madam President, to place on the consent calendar. Madam President, that is calendar page 14, Calendar 432, Senate Bill 1192, would also move to place that item on the consent calendar.

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THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Mr. Clerk, would you read the bill.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate on the consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber. Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate on the consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

Madam President, the items placed on Consent Calendar Number 2 begin on calendar page 3, Calendar 101, House Bill 6096; calendar page 6, Calendar 229, Substitute for Senate Bill 205; calendar page 9, Calendar 330, House Bill 6373; calendar page 14, Calendar Number 432; Calendar page 20, Calendar 483, Substitute for House Bill 5045.

Calendar page 26, Calendar 51, Substitute for Senate Bill 852; calendar page 28, Calendar 108, Substitute for Senate Bill 1039; calendar page 29, Calendar 122, Substitute for Senate Bill 844; and calendar page 36, calendar 273, substitute for Senate Bill 1115.

SB1192

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SENATE

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Madam President, I believe that completes those items placed on Consent Calendar Number 2.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir.

Will you once again announce the roll call vote. And the machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The Senate is now voting by roll call on the second consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber. The Senate is now voting by roll call on the second consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

All members have voted. All members have voted. The machine will be locked. Mr. Clerk, will you call the tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion is on adoption of Consent Calendar Number 2.

Total Number voting	36
Necessary for adoption	19
Those voting Yea	36
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	0

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SENATE

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May 20, 2011

THE CHAIR:

The consent calendar has been adopted, Consent
Calendar Number 2.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes. Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, an additional item to mark go
at the present time, calendar page 34, Calendar
242, Senate Bill 1173.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Calendar page 34, Calendar 242, File Number
433 Senate Bill 1173, AN ACT CONCERNING QUALIFIED
PRIVATE INVESTMENTS FOR CONNECTICUT INNOVATIONS,
INCORPORATED'S PRESEED PROGRAM, favorable report of
the Committee on Commerce and Export, Higher
Education and Appropriations.

THE CHAIR:

Senator LeBeau.

SENATOR LeBEAU:

Good afternoon, Madam President. How are you
today?

THE CHAIR: