



February 21, 2012

To: Commerce Committee

From: Terry Edelstein, President/CEO

Re: **H.B. No. 5105** (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE JOB EXPANSION TAX CREDIT PROGRAM AND INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING CERTAIN SERVICES FROM THE DEPARTMENTS OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES.

I am pleased to submit testimony in support of HB 5105. This bill would extend the tax credit program for employers who hire individuals with disabilities to those individuals served by DDS and DMHAS.

The Connecticut Community Providers Association (CCPA) represents organizations that provide services and supports for people with disabilities and significant challenges including children and adults with substance use disorders, mental illness, developmental, and physical disabilities. Community providers deliver quality health and human services to 500,000 of Connecticut's residents each year. We are the safety net.

Our member organizations support people with disabilities in job training and job seeking skills and work with individuals with disabilities in obtaining and retaining employment.

The tax credit legislation that you passed in 2011 provides an incentive for employers hiring individuals with disabilities supported by the Bureau of Rehabilitative Services, one of several programs that foster employment for people with disabilities. HB 5015 extends this tax credit program to individuals supported by the Department of Developmental Services and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. Both of these state agencies contract with community providers to provide long-term supports for individuals with disabilities in employment services. The Bureau of Rehabilitative Services contracts for short-term services.

We recommend a modification in the proposed bill to make it clear that these tax credits would apply to individuals with mental illness or addictions "*receiving employment services or funded by*" DMHAS. A change in language would be consistent with lines 51 – 53 relating to DDS "*operated or funded by*" DDS.

Proposed amendment in **BOLD/CAPS**:

48 (B) Is (i) receiving vocational rehabilitation services from the Bureau
49 of Rehabilitative Services, (ii) receiving employment services from **OR FUNDED BY** the
50 Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, or (iii)
51 participating in employment opportunities and day services, as
52 defined in section 17a-226, operated or funded by the Department of
53 Developmental Services;

Thank you for the opportunity to support this important legislation.

CCPA

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