

**To:** Republican Members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee  
**From:** Brunilda Ferraj, Senior Public Policy Specialist  
**Re:** Proposed Revenue Package for State FY 16 – 17  
**Date:** May 11, 2015

Good afternoon Senator Frantz, Representative Davis and members of the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee:

My name is Brunilda Ferraj, Senior Public Policy Specialist at the Connecticut Community Providers Association (CCPA). CCPA represents community-based organizations that provide health and human services for children, adults, and families in multiple areas, including mental health, substance use disorders, and developmental disabilities. Our members serve more than half a million Connecticut residents each year.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding the proposed revenue package for FY 16 and FY 17.

The state budget proposed by Governor Malloy in February cut more than \$160 million from existing programs in every area of health and human services, including:

- \$107 million from Medicaid rates,
- \$25 million from outpatient mental health and addiction services, and
- \$50 million from group homes, day services, in-home supports for developmentally disabled, and from voluntary emergency placements.

The proposed cuts, after nearly a decade of stagnant funding, are the deepest in a generation, and would reduce, and in many cases, eliminate individual programs for youths and individuals in in need of developmental disability, mental health or substance use services.

Clients, families, and community providers have filled the halls of the LOB and the Capitol for the past 10 weeks, sharing their grave concerns about the potential loss of life-sustaining programs – you have heard from parents forced to choose between caring for a disabled child and working; individuals with mental illness whose lives would be upended without the stability of outpatient services, and many more.

In separate spending proposals, the Appropriations Committee and the Republican leadership heard those concerns, and recognized that without adequate funding, thousands of individuals and families would be at risk.

***Connecticut Community Providers Association***

As providers of those services, and veterans in this annual effort to secure proper funding for the services the state contracts us to provide, we believe the bipartisan support for the individuals we serve is remarkable.

But spending plans need revenue to fund them. Increasing taxes is a tough choice. But without additional revenues, the programs that both Democrats and Republicans support cannot be sustained. Insufficient revenue will force programs to close and the disastrous outcomes shared by thousands of individuals in recent weeks will become reality. Without additional revenues, the quality of life of the individuals we serve, and every community in Connecticut where they live, will be diminished.

On behalf of CCPA, our members, and the half-million individuals served every year by community providers, we thank Democratic and Republican leaders of the General Assembly for their support. We also believe that a responsible spending plan must be balanced, and we support the revenue increases necessary to accomplish that.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or for additional information (860-257-7909; [bferraj@ccpa-inc.org](mailto:bferraj@ccpa-inc.org)).