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Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Noelle Talevi I am the executive Director of the Citizens Commission on Human Rights of Connecticut. I would like to address DCF's extreme reliance on behavioral health services.

In 2004 An Act Concerning Child Poverty And The Use Of Psychotropic Medications With Children And Youth In State Care, was passed to establish and maintain a database to track the use of mind-altering drugs in DCF children. This tracking system has not yet been put into place and therefore we still do not know how many children in DCF are on them.

Diabetes, kidney failure, liver problems, Tourettes Syndrome, severe weight gain, mania, heart attacks, sudden death, suicidal and homicidal ideations, are just a few of the side effects associated with psychiatric drugs that are prescribed to children in DCF. No psychiatric drug cures anything.

We spend tens of millions of dollars a year on medicating this population of children when this leads to no solution to the trauma or problems in their lives, or the lives of their families.

An appropriate, inclusive tracking system, would not only allow the state to keep a better eye on side effects, and patterns of prescribing by different physicians, it would also make it easier to monitor the costs.

Drugs are a big business. A multi-billion dollar industry, and children in state care are a veritable cash cow to unscrupulous doctors and pharmaceutical companies. Eli Lilly, Astra Zeneca, Janssen, Bristol-Meyers Squibb; all have recently been targets of lawsuits for allegedly peddling their medications for unapproved uses while downplaying or concealing their risks. Allegations of manipulated clinical trials, ghostwritten medical journal articles, and defrauding Medicaid and a state-supported prescription programs are some of the charges.

Bristol-Myers Squibb agreed last fall to pay a total of \$515 million - \$1.9 million of which was to Connecticut - to settle federal and state allegations of misconduct.

The New York Times recently reported that three prominent Harvard University researchers responsible for "discovering" bipolar disorder in children - and for treating it with psychiatric drugs - were found to have failed to report a combined \$3.2 million in income from drug companies. Between 1994 and 2003, the number of children diagnosed with bipolar depression increased 40-fold, and sales of the drugs used to treat it doubled.

I could go on. The point is, The Department of Children and Families, and, we as a society continue to buy into psychiatric interventions and psychiatric drugs, when these obviously are not working. The situation keeps getting worse, and they keep asking for more money.

For children and families to be better off after having been involved with DCF, what they definitely don't need is to be drugged into incapability.