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My name is Joann Hauff. I am grateful for this opportunity to share with the Commission information to assist you in meeting the charge issued to you by the Governor.

I am a lifelong resident of St. Clair County and a registered voter in the City of Marysville. I am here before you today to testify regarding my concerns with St. Clair County Community Mental Health. (SCCCMH).

I have a 27 year old daughter who has Epilepsy and is developmentally disabled (DD). Kristi attended the Woodland Developmental Center, a center based program, until she completed their program at age 26. She is currently attending Community Enterprises (formerly known as ARC) in Port Huron. Kristi's father and I have always advocated for our daughter and continually strive to improve her quality of life. However, this past year SCCCMH has made cuts in their services which have gravely impacted my daughter's ability to participate in activities with her peers in the community.

In July of 2012, SCCCMH decreased Kristi's Community Living Support (CLS) hours from 10 hours per week to 3 hours per week. CLS Workers are highly qualified and experienced staff who assist individuals with developmental disabilities to be able to participate actively in the community. This community integration and participation in outings and activities is vital for Kristi to learn socialization and safety. SCCCMH said that Kristi's hours were being cut because she could attend Community Enterprise's Night Life Activities which were offered up to 5 nights per week. However, in November of 2012, SCCCMH terminated **ALL** Community Enterprise's Night Life and Weekend Activities.

This program was eliminated before Kristi ever began attending it. Due to this service no longer being available to her, I requested that SCCCMH reinstate her CLS hours. This led to many conversations with various SCCCMH staff regarding "medically necessary" criteria. I was brokenhearted when the Adult & Family Services Assistant Division Director of SCCCMH, asked me; "*Would she have to be institutionalized if hours cut?*" I felt her choice of words to be very insensitive and disrespectful, especially given her administrative position at SCCCMH. I thought the word "*institutionalized*" was removed from the mental health vocabulary back when "*retarded*" was.

In September of 2012, a "Request for Hearing" was filed with the Department of Community Health. In February of 2013, a telephone hearing was held at which Dr. Tom Seilheimer, PhD, psychologist at SCCCMH testified that he concurred with the CMH findings. His testimony is very puzzling to me in that he has never met or examined my daughter. The Judge's decision was; *"Three (3) CLS hours per week should be sufficient to help Appellant become more integrated with the community and work on her safety skills."* I'm sure you would feel differently if Kristi were your special needs child whose limited cognitive skills and vulnerability put her safety at great risk in the community.

Kristi has an obsession with older males. I am a divorced single mother so Kristi does not have a male role model in her home. I am grateful that Kristi has a male CLS worker who is teaching her boundaries and appropriate behavior with males. The time she is able to spend working with him on this goal is invaluable and might very possibly save her life someday. I believe it "medically necessary" that she be provided additional CLS hours with her worker in order to achieve this goal, which would allow her greater independence and safety in the community.

Parents who have children with intellectual and developmental disabilities want their child to live and work in the community and have access to services and supports to make that happen. It is very troubling to me to see valuable services cut to my daughter and other families in the same situation. We are told that there are no monies available for CLS Hours, Community Enterprise Night Life and Weekend Activities, Micro-enterprise Program at C.E. which helps DD clients start their own businesses, or Home of Your Own, which helps DD clients to live in the least restrictive environment or Camps, such as Camp Fowler, which specializes in working with Developmentally Disabled individuals.

I would like to thank the Commission for providing this opportunity to speak to you today. I am truly grateful for the benefits and services that my daughter receives. However, I am fearful of being retaliated against for my testimony here today and I am afraid to speak up but someone must tell you how dissatisfied citizens in St. Clair County are with our local Community Mental Health. I speak for myself but am keenly aware of other parents and caregivers who would like to be here but also feel too threatened of losing their services. I feel that I need to tell you the truth as seen from my perspective.

I admit that I don't know how other CMHs around the state operate. I also admit that I don't know how the finances work. But I attend the SCCCMH Board of Directors meetings and I wonder why services are cut from our children in St, Clair County when:

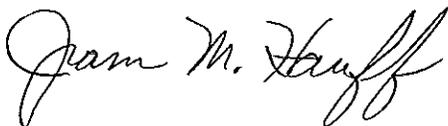
- All their laid off employees have returned to work
- Purchased new vehicles
- Transferred over 2 million dollars from their General Fund to their Building Fund
- Received \$220,000.00 from Genesee CMH which in January 2014 will combine with St. Clair, Lapeer and Sanilac Counties to become Region 10
- Surplus of 2.4 million dollars in their Internal Service Fund (ISF) PIHP
- In October 2012 SCCCMH had a \$4.4 million shortfall and made extreme cuts. Did they over-correct ... possibly. But if so, why haven't some services for the Developmentally Disabled been reinstated?
- The Director of SCCCMH has previously stated that the Community Enterprises Night Life activities had been offered five nights a week, which was beyond the amount of services that a typical citizen would receive. Although I disagree with how many nights a typical young adult might go out, I wonder why they didn't just reduce the number of nights, not completely eliminate the program.

I mean no disrespect to these individuals, but I am concerned about the future of SCCCMH when our previous director has now been appointed interim CEO of Region 10, and the St. Clair County & Sanilac County directors are married to each other. In my mind, this is a conflict of interest in the newly formed Region 10 and I believe that the Commission should be aware of it.

Maybe this is how all the CMHs operate around the state, I don't know. But I want you to be informed that this is how St. Clair County Community Mental Health is operating.

I am asking you to do the right thing, as I feel that I have done her today ... even when the alternative may have seemed easier ... and please advocate for the needs of persons with developmental disabilities in St. Clair County.

It has been a privilege to speak to you today and I thank you for your time.



Joann Hauff