

July 17, 2026

Joint Committee on Judiciary
Legislative Office Building, Room 2500
Hartford, CT 06106

- Testimony for Correction Advisory Committee Public Hearing -

I am 21 years old, and have been incarcerated at Cheshire CI since March 26, 2026. My end of sentence date is April 2027. I believe my testimony as a young individual who is "just stopping by" is very important, because many incarcerated individuals who have been incarcerated for a long period of time may not be as aware of changing climates as others.

When I came to Cheshire CI, I underwent a mental health evaluation from a Licensed Practical Clinician. I was told in this brief (less than 4 minute) encounter that I was not mentally ill, and would not receive mental health treatment. Since I was a kid, I've struggled with mental health. I have underwent multiple inpatient hospitalizations and have been taking mental health medication for over 5 years. I explained this to the LPC, as well as the supervising psychologist. I was told that if I "actually had what [I] had been diagnosed with, [I] wouldn't have survived this long in [jail]." This is just one of many examples of the 'status quo' of mental health treatment at CCI; cold, indifferent, and without compassion. It seems that the professionals here are more concerned with themselves than the individuals that are supposed to be under their care. I have begged to be seen by a doctor regarding medication that was abruptly stopped since April. It has been 3 months and I still have not had my medications verified. This is not a matter of verification, it is a matter of willingness to help. Due to the multiple grievances I have filed, the LPC and other state employees have openly shared my protected health information with not only other state employees, but with inmates too.

This leads me to my next concern; discrimination. It came to my attention shortly after the submission of my grievances that a CO (Correction Officer) had come up with a lie about me. This state employee told other officers and inmates alike that he had caught me in a sexual act. This blatant lie has caused me to be threatened, bullied, and openly called slurs by inmate's and CO's alike. I am 21 years old being told these things by grown adults who represent the State of Connecticut. I could expect this kind of behavior from other inmates, but not officers.

It is extremely difficult to deal with incarceration. Time away from family and friends, life passing you by, and stress regarding your case take a very big toll on an incarcerated individual's mental and physical health; that is just part of incarceration. However, when the people employed to help and 'correct' you are the ones causing you harm; it can truly take away your humanity. It is not the job of CO's or mental health staff to further punish people who reside in our jails and prisons. We should be provided with proper care that is not callous and cold. Adult officers of the state who are tasked with supervising other adults should act as such. I hope this testimony is used to change a culture in CT's jails and prisons from a culture of retribution to a culture of care and real corrective action so that recidivism is reduced and future victims never have to be victims at all.

Thank you,



Patrick D. Talarski