

January xxx, 2006

Mr. Charles Curie  
Administrator  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
1 Choke Cherry Rd.  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dr. Westley Clark  
Director  
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
1 Choke Cherry Rd.  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Administrator Curie and Dr. Clark:

We are writing to ask you to restore \$2.5 million in FY 2006 funding for the Recovery Community Services Program.

You have been outspoken supporters of the services that recovery community organizations are providing to people all across our country. Therefore, we were very concerned when we learned that SAMHSA plans to cut all new funding for the RCSP Program in 2006. The RCSP program is the only federal program that supports peer-to-peer recovery support services that are making a real difference in communities across the country.

As Administrator Curie said in a SAMHSA NEWS article highlighting the program, “The Recovery Community Services Program capitalizes on the unique contribution that people in recovery can make to their peers. Services provided by peers in recovery—such as providing information and referral; mentoring others in the areas of life skills, education, and employment; and offering emotional support and guidance based on first-hand experience—complement, extend, and enhance the formal treatment provided by professionals.”

Some examples of the work that the 30 grantees have undertaken include:

**CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY FOR ADDICTION RECOVERY (CCAR):**  
CCAR’s Windham Recovery Community Center has piloted a number of innovative peer-to-peer recovery support services and will be a model for seven more Recovery Community Centers around the state, where support groups for individuals in recovery and their families meet, access to jobs and other supports are available and recovery community members manage the program. In just one year, almost 10,000 people signed

in the log book as they entered the Center to use the computers, attend a support group, attend the CCAR Windham Chapter meeting, and attend a training event or workshop.

**NORTHERN OHIO RECOVERY ASSOCIATION (NORA):** NORA served over 1253 people in its first year, working with adults and providing mentoring services to adolescents. Adults who are in recovery mentor youth who are at risk for substance abuse due to their parent's addiction and other risk factors. NORA is a faith- and community-based organization that works with ex-offenders re-entering the community who are at risk for relapse. NORA is organizing in Akron, Lorain and Cleveland and is looking to extend its program to Canton. In a suburban Cleveland community which is plagued with crime, HIV and poverty, NORA is developing a coalition of persons in the community and in recovery to reduce the alcohol use among residents

**WELCOME HOME MINISTRIES:** A comprehensive supportive services ministry for women leaving the jail/prison system in the San Diego California Area, Welcome Home Ministries has been working for 9 years to assist thousands of men and women. They assist all who actively participate in the ministry to remain free from incarceration and the chains of addiction of drugs and alcohol, Welcome Home Ministries offers support, love, and mentorship to women by other women ex-offenders/recovering addicts. Supportive services include: assistance with job placement and training, monthly support meetings, assistance with transportation, food, clothing, court appearances, college applications, GED and other educational services.

**WHITE BISON:** White Bison is working to bring 100 Native American communities into healing by 2010 through its Wellbriety resources, conferences, specialized community training events, coalitions, and the grassroots Firestarters circles of recovery groups. White Bison offers sobriety, recovery, addictions prevention and wellness learning materials to the Native American community.

You have shown a great understanding of the unique contributions that people in recovery can make to their peers and of the importance of recovery supports to breaking the cycle of addiction. We urge you to reconsider and restore \$2.5 million in FY 2006 funding for the Recovery Community Services Program.

Sincerely,