

House Civil Justice Committee
Interested Party Testimony, HB 249
Jonda Clemings, MEd, LSW

Chairman Pavliga, Ranking Member Brewer and members of the House Behavioral Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written-only interested party testimony. I am extremely grateful to introduce myself and share my views of opposition to this proposed bill from a person with lived experience and provider.

My name is Jonda Clemings, MEd, LSW (Licensed Social Worker) and I am a person with lived experience of major depressive disorder (MDD) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). I have also witnessed persons in my family that had/have anxiety, depression, and bipolar disorder along with others that have dealt with substance use disorders (SUD) and are now in recovery. I am in treatment for my depression and working towards recovery every single day. Furthermore, as I mentioned earlier I am a LSW who currently works with individuals that are 60+ and have physical and/or mental health diagnoses. During my past work, I have had the pleasure of working in a psychiatric hospital and community mental health, homeless and affordable housing field, and several positions in the healthcare field. I have also been an advocate for others with mental health lived experience.

The legislature should focus on increasing access to community-based, person-centered, and self-directed services, rather than forcing people into hospitalization.