

1/10/14

Testimony of Bernard L. Prolifi, Milton, VT in Support of S.287

To be read by Ruth Kennedy Grant, MD

My name is Ruth Kennedy Grant, I live in Waltham, VT and am the close family member of someone who suffers from severe schizophrenia. He has been hospitalized 17 times and as a result of the extensive wait times he has endured repeatedly, I strongly support S.287, as I have similar bills in the past. I have submitted updated testimony to Agatha if you would like to read about the heartbreak and nightmares of my family caused by the long periods of time waiting for appropriate medical care in Vermont on top of the severe suffering caused by the disease itself.

Today I will read the testimony of Bernard Prolifi, a person who lives with a serious mental illness and cannot be here this evening. Bernie called me to express his support of S.287 and requested I read his testimony.

Here are his words:

Ladies & gentlemen of the committee I Bernard Louis Profili wish to lend my voice to support Senate Bill 287 concerning involuntary medications for the mentally ill. I'm a mentally ill consumer at the Howard Center who started out as a patient and ended up as a mental health worker - full merit service at the State of Maryland Mental Hygiene Administration's Spring Grove Hospital Center, the 3rd oldest state mental health facility in the United States. As a support staff & after hours volunteer I could see people improve with the use of medication.(Some were my friends) I'm also a peer counselor for the Peer Access Line here in Chittenden County (warm-line) of which I'm the founder & presently senior staffer. It is state funded program thru a Federal Samsa Grant.

It is a well-known fact that *if someone who has a first time psychotic break starts the right medication right away they can have their life reclaimed returning to society as very productive person.* I get my information from Robert Vortowski M.A in Psychology a former classmate of mine at Essex Community College in Baltimore County Md. He worked at the Crownsville Hospital Center in Crownsville 'Md for over 10 years helping minority patients regain their lives. *First time patients do well if they are started on a medication regiment right away. Senate Bill 287 gives those patients who are recalcitrant to that idea a fighting chance to get well enough with outside maintenance treatment to never grace a mental health facility in a hospital setting again - maybe just respite care to get some r & r from life's daily challenges. Please give these people that chance.* Respectfully submitted Bernard Louis Profili A.A,