

Theresa Utton-Jerman

Subject: FW: Copy of testimony at on Budget

From: Jane Winterling

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I spoke at the Springfield location on February 10. Springfield Town Hall, 96 Main Street, 3rd floor Conference Room (Selectmen's Hall) [5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.] Here is my written testimony.

My name is Jane Winterling from Guilford and I am here to ask for the restoration of funding to the Vermont Recovery Education Project, level funded from last year at \$60,000 and to become part of the general budget so we do not have to go through this every year. The Vermont Recovery Education Project has been around since 1997 and a fundamental and critical part of Vermont Peer Programming. WRAP was the first of its kind, it has given Vermont peers a voice, the ability to self advocate and be a creative part of the policy development and workforce in this state. It has been this way because of Vermont's willingness to put money behind their words of support. This funding allows us to continue to train, maintain and support the workforce for this program. The grant is for \$60,000. which is very small given how much this program has transformed and saved lives.

On my way to the meeting I received a call from a person who in the last 5 years has overcome mental health challenges to become a WRAP Facilitator and to find employment in the agencies where she received services. She holds wellness support groups at this site. She has recently been diagnosed with cancer and has adjusted her WRAP to meet this difficulty. Without the knowledge she obtained from WRAP she said she would have given up and let herself die. Instead she has self advocated for the treatment that will work for her, relies heavily on the natural support she has developed over the last 5 years. She has put together her paperwork in case she does not survive but most importantly she has hope and feels good about how she is handling this challenge. We hear this all the time. WRAP impacts our lives and gives us a way to connect in wellness meet new challenges to go on to live lives we always wanted to have for many years after the workshop. It is a way to meet the new challenges that having a normal life brings.

Thank you,

Jane Winterling
Vermont WRAP Education Coordinator
Copeland Center for Wellness and Recovery