American Enterprise Institute
for Public Policy Research

The Honorable Tim Murphy
Attn. Brittany Havens
Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

June 10, 2013

Dear Congressman Murphy

Thank you for your dedication to this issue. You ask:

*Do you see any benefit in de-monopolizing the Protection & Advocacy system altogether? That is, allowing states to select attorneys for individual representation on a competitive basis, rather than contracting these representations out to a designated organization in each state, like the Disability Rights Center of Maine in Mr. Bruce's Case?*

As a rule, SAMHSA should not enter into contracts with or endorse any clinical or legal entity that is averse to or dismissive of the practices mainstream psychiatry. I am referring here, specifically, to the appropriate use of psychiatric medication, involuntary hospitalization or mandated outpatient care.

I see potential benefit in allowing states to select attorneys to represent severely mentally ill patients in commitment proceedings, but there must be a mechanism of some sort for HHS to override a state's choice if the attorney chosen rejects the practices of mainstream psychiatry. Given the popularity of the "recovery model" at the level of state mental health departments (granted, far more pronounced in some states than others), simply allowing states latitude is not a guarantee of reasonable representation.

Thank you for your attention

Sally Satel MD