



# TOWN OF NEW WINDSOR

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

555 UNION AVENUE  
NEW WINDSOR, NEW YORK 12553  
Telephone: (845) 565-7000 • Fax: (845) 563-4694



**MICHAEL C. BIASOTTI**  
Chief of Police

**RICHARD S. HOVEY**  
Deputy Chief of Police

4/17/2014

Michael Biasotti  
New Windsor Police Department  
555 Union Ave.  
New Windsor N.Y. 12553

Honorable Tim Murphy  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-6115

**Dear Congressman Murphy:**

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to testify before such a prestigious committee, addressing what I consider to be one of the most important issues concerning our country today. As both a Police Chief and the father of a daughter suffering with severe mental illness, I have personally experienced two of the major issues discussed at the hearing. Issues that I believe are impediments to successful outcomes for our severely mentally ill population, their families and the criminal justice system in general. First and most importantly, HIPAA excludes families from active participation in the medical decisions of their loved one's care. Instead it assumes that a person with a severe mental illness can make competent decisions regarding their care, many cannot. It is the families that first see deration in their loved ones condition, and the families that deal with the constant consequences of their repeated states of crisis. It is also the families that deal with the resulting tragedies. (Homelessness, Arrest, Incarceration and Suicide) In cases of severe mental illness, early intervention by the family results in earlier care and far fewer crisis situations. HIPAA should be amended in cases of severe mental illness, so that the family, those who know them the best are included in treatment decisions.

Secondly the IMD exclusion must be changed, it adds to the continued reduction of psychiatric bed availability through the country. Ample psychiatric beds do not exist to properly stabilize the current number of persons in psychiatric crisis today. The result is persons being released in a matter of hours, not because they are adequately stabilized but because psychiatric bed space is not available. In many cases early return to the community when not fully stabilized, results in interaction with law enforcement and an introduction to the criminal Justice System. Ample hospital bed space would break this cycle, ensuring adequate stabilization before return to the community setting them up for success rather than failure.

I can tell you from experience, from a family perspective, that there is nothing more frustrating and

depressing than to feel that your government is working against you, as you attempt to get help for your loved one, someone who is too ill to seek help for themselves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael C. Biasotti". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Michael Biasotti  
Chief of Police  
New Windsor Police Department