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HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMES AND CORRECTIONS

DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROGRAMS

**To Members of the House Judiciary Committee,
Subcommittee on Crimes and Corrections**

Drug and Alcohol Programs

**Testimony provided by Mary Rose Worthington, M.S.
PA. Director Program Services
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I would like to begin my testimony today, by thanking the members of the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crimes and Corrections for the opportunity to address you today and the SCI Chester Administration for hosting this public hearing.

My name is Mary Rose Worthington, M.S. and I am the Director of Program Services for CiviGenics, Inc. In that capacity, I am responsible for all of the Drug and Alcohol Programs associated with our PA. Community Corrections Contracted Facilities Programs and the Therapeutic Communities that we operate in three (3) PA. State Correctional Institutions. I have had the opportunity over the last 25 years to professionally be directly involved with providing substance abuse services to clients in the criminal justice system, both in-prison and in the community. The evolution of the Therapeutic Community to it's present level today has been phenomenal, and is a direct result of your continued support and the vision of the representatives of the PA. Department of Corrections.

At the present time, CiviGenics is contracted by the PA. Department of Corrections to provide an RSAT (Residential Substance Abuse Treatment) Therapeutic Community Program at SCI Graterford and is preparing to begin a similar program at SCI Somerset in May. The RSAT Program design involves 12 months of residential substance abuse services; Phase I - 6 months in a SCI Therapeutic

CiviGenics

Page 2 Testimony – Subcommittee on Crime and Corrections

Community followed by Phase II - 6 months in a Community Corrections Program with Intensive Outpatient substance abuse services and then Phase III- Parole under Intensive Supervision with Outpatient substance abuse counseling. CiviGenics is responsible to provide the drug and alcohol treatment services in Phases I & II. The Program we provide is the Correctional Recovery Academy. The Academy is a recovery and performance based treatment approach to substance abuse and crime. Our model focuses on the proscribed attitudes and behaviors among inmates that often lead to relapse to alcohol and other drugs, re-arrest and re-incarceration. Our goal is to significantly reduce relapse to drugs, alcohol and criminal recidivism. CiviGenics has targeted core criminogenic factors along with the forces of addiction. The Academy defines "recovery" in terms of both addiction and criminality. With this broadened concept of recovery, the Academy provides a structured cognitive-behavioral curriculum and supporting interventions in a social learning environment.

I am here today to specifically address our Therapeutic Community Program (RSAT-SCI Graterford) that we have been operating since Feb 1998 and the positive impact we believe has occurred as a result of this unique model. Statistically, we have admitted 284 clients with an 89% completion rate in Phase I and a 62% completion rate in Phase II. Typically, our clients are Technical Parole Violators with an average of 8 years in an institution with subsequent parole violations due to positive urines and/or lack of attendance and progress in treatment. They are generally economically disadvantaged, lack positive support systems and are undereducated. Many have never been in treatment before. Yet, they are doing remarkably well in this State RSAT Program design, we believe for several reasons 1) The program is voluntary 2) They are somewhat isolated in the prison 3) The Program is highly structured 4) There is a treatment transition in all Phases of the Program through collaboration with Community Corrections Center and Regional staff, the Outpatient Treatment Providers for Phase II and III, State Parole Agents for all of the Phases and CiviGenics Phase I staff who coordinates this Bi-weekly Team Meeting. Of major importance in this unique model for comprehensive treatment is the financial support by the Department of Corrections for the Intensive Outpatient substance abuse services in Phase II and the PA. Board of State Parole for the Outpatient Services in Phase III. In this era of Managed Behavioral Health Care, where the funding is restricted for the client involved in the criminal justice system, without this support many clients would not have an opportunity to be successful in treatment. This collaborative, connected and

Page 3 Testimony – Subcommittee on Crime and Corrections

systems oriented approach to the provision of services results in funding that has been well invested for the 18 months from Phase I through Phase III.

As we know, 75-80% of incarcerated men are there as a result of a substance abuse problem as well as nearly 90% of the incarcerated females. The impact their incarceration and addiction has on their victims, children, families and their communities is like the proverbial ripple effect of throwing a stone in a pond.

It is my hope, that as a result of these hearings more inmates will have the opportunity to receive RSAT Program services and that next time, that ripple effect will be the result of a successful treatment experience. Thank you.

Mary Rose Wortz, MS.