

Florida Attorney Advised Residents of Rights under the Baker Act in Seminar at Mental Health Watchdog Headquarters

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA, US, June 13, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR), a non-profit mental health watchdog dedicated to the exposure and eradication of abuses committed under the guise of mental health, hosted a complimentary seminar with attorney and former Assistant Public Defender, Carmen Miller, Esq., to educate Floridians on their mental health rights. This seminar took place on Wednesday, 12 June at the CCHR Florida headquarters, 109 N. Fort Harrison Ave. in downtown Clearwater. Ms. Miller addressed abuses of Florida's main mental health bill, the Baker Act, with preventative actions citizens can take to safeguard themselves and their families. Ms. Miller has extensive experience in criminal and family justice, given her previous 8-year tenure as Assistant Public Defender in the Thirteenth Circuit in Tampa. Her private practice today specializes in cases of those who have been Baker Acted.



CCHR says its Psychiatric Abuse Hotline gets about 80 calls a month from someone concerned about their child, a friend or loved one who has been Baker Acted and in many instances the victim did not meet the legal criteria to be sent to a psychiatric facility.

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CCHR receives too many calls on a weekly basis from families whose loved ones were illegally taken into custody under the Baker Act. This abuse must end.”
Diane Stein, President of CCHR Florida

While the original stated intention of the Baker Act was actually to protect the rights of citizens sent for involuntary psychiatric examination, Ms. Miller noted that it has become a source of abuse for Floridians. The Baker Act allows for individuals of all ages, including children, to be taken into custody and sent for an involuntary psychiatric examination, often against their will, or without parental consent in the case of children.

The number of people being “Baker Acted,” as the act of involuntary commitment is commonly called, has risen 118% between 2001 and 2016, according to a report from the Department of Children and Families. [1] Another recent official report shows that more than 199,000 involuntary psychiatric examinations were done in Florida, with over 32,000 of these done to children — some as young as two-years-old. [2]

“The Baker Act is being abused and is being used incorrectly on people of all ages,” said Diane Stein, President CCHR Florida. “CCHR receives too many calls on a weekly basis from families whose loved ones were illegally taken into custody under the Baker Act. This abuse must end.”

CCHR launched its statewide mental health campaign in 2015 to educate Floridians on little-known abuses tied to the Baker Act. The campaign has included distributing educational materials at law establishments, publishing online and print materials for parents, and conducting free public seminars.

To learn more about the Baker Act or to reserve seats at the next seminar, please call CCHR Florida at 727-442-8820.

About CCHR: Initially established by the [Church of Scientology](#) and renowned psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz in 1969, CCHR’s mission is to eradicate abuses committed under the guise of mental health and enact patient and consumer protections. [L. Ron Hubbard](#), founder of Scientology, first brought psychiatric imprisonment to wide public notice: “Thousands and thousands are seized without process of law, every week, over the ‘free world’ tortured, castrated, killed. All in the name of ‘mental health,’” he wrote in March 1969. For more information visit www.cchrflorida.org

Sources:

[1] The Baker Act The Florida Mental Health Act Fiscal Year 2016/2017 Annual Report
<https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/samh/publications/docs/The%20Baker%20Act%20-%20FL%20MH%20Act%20-%20FY%2016-17%20Annual%20Report%20-%20Released%20June%202018.pdf>

[2] Baker Act Reporting Center via WPTV press release
<https://www.wptv.com/longform/children-in-crisis-floridas-baker-acted-kids>

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