

**HB 518, mental health advance directives – Testimony on April 6, 2011**

**Dan Aune, Executive Director**

**Chairman and Committee Members:**

**Mental Health America of Montana Board, Staff, and five Affiliate Chapters are in support of HB518.**

**Recovery is possible for individuals diagnosed with mental illness and recovery is about choice! HB518 is a recovery bill that promotes individual responsibility and choice in the individuals care through an episode of increased impairment.**

**We know crises are typically preceded by a period of decompensation and incapacity when everyone but the person with the illness can see what is happening, yet there is no legal way to break through the denial and get treatment. HB 518 creates a legal mechanism for the consumer to consent—in advance—to care during these periods of incapacity.**

**We urge you to pass HB 518 and contribute both to the mental health consumer recovery movement and the recognition of responsibility and choice for an individual diagnosed with a mental illness.**

***“Educating and Advocating for the Mental Health of all Montanans.”***  
**[www.montanamentalhealth.org](http://www.montanamentalhealth.org)**