



The Consumer Leadership Forum

Consumers Uniting For Freedom and Choice

Dear President Qbama:

My name is Dorothy Adams and I am the Executive Director of the Consumer Leadership Forum located in the District of Columbia. I am a consumer that was diagnosed with Major Depression in 1985.

I work with consumers and advocate on their behalf trying to make changes in the District of Columbia mental health system. It is a long and hard road for consumers to get on the path of recovery. I am a consumer in recovery and have been so for eight (8) years now. I have not taken medications nor do I see any doctors for depression. I thank God for bringing me out of my depression and changing my life. If it was not for Him I know I would not be doing what I do today.

I am writing because of what I noticed about your theme of making changes. CLF second annual Consumer Choice Awards Ceremony theme for the last year was "When Nothing Changes, Everything Stays the Same". I began to notice how your theme and my title were saying some of the same things. I wrote a poem for this ceremony and I want you to have a copy of it. This poem is about me, and how I made changes in my life.

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It means a lot to me to know that people want to make changes in today's society. It seems that sometimes we get stuck in the past and don't want to move forward. I am glad that you want to make changes in how the government is doing business. If people don't try new things they don't know what they are missing. Everything you do in life is a learning experience. You either learn something new or you find a better way of doing it.

I want to thank you for standing up and making changes. It is time for someone to look and see that what they have been doing is not working, and that it's time to make a change. I wish you all the best in everything you do. God will be with you all the way.

Thanks for all you are doing and will do in the White House as President.

Dorothy Adams
Executive Director

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Dare You To Make A Change In Me

By Dorothy Adams

July 25, 2008

If you make changes in what you do, I
can begin to come out,
From up under you, No more
staying in the system,

Or lying around depending on you,
I will start to live my life again,
Not through the system, but through what I do,
Knowing that through all my heartaches, I will eventually win,

Nothing will keep me down long,
Or stop me from growing,
I am determined to make changes,
Starting with how I make choices in my life, and by knowing,

What to do, and which way to go, What road to
take, and when to get off, after discovering,
What doors I will open, To keep me on the
path to wellness and recovery,

Do you want me to move on or stand still?
Do you want the system to make changes?
Or is this your will, That you try to keep
me in the same place year after year,

What does it take for someone, better yet anyone?
To listen to what I have to say,
Will you listen if society didn't give me labels?
Or in your eyes will it always be just another day,

That people think of me as an illness and not a person, Can
you look beyond the sickness and see who I really am,
Can you feel the pain that I went through,
In order for me to stand here in front of you,

Do you know how many sleepless nights I had? Do
you know how much weight I gain?
Do you ever forget who you are?
Because your environment wasn't the same,

It's time for a change, so stop letting excuses get in the way,
For you not doing what is important to consumers,
Remember you can be standing here where I am today,
And how would you feel with a label instead of a name,

Consumers are homeless due to mental illness,
Mothers, fathers, and family members are crying,
Wondering what has become of a system that is supposed to help them,
It seems to me that the system is slowly dying,

It's time for a change,
It's time to wake up,
Come together and reunite,
And learn from me how I stay on the path when I get stuck,

Change comes with a price,
Nothing should stay the same,
We are better when we work together,
So take away the labels and give me back my name,

I give honor to Jesus for me standing here,
Because without Him I don't know where I would be,
Just as I ask you to look at me to see what I went through,
He knows and was there all the way, so I didn't need to ask Him to see,

What was happening to me? He brought me
out so I can let other people know,
So I am standing here today, Saying its time
for a change so I can continue to grow,

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 14, 2009

Dear Friend:

Thank you for your kind note. Your thoughtful words join a chorus of millions of Americans who are eager to lead our Nation towards a brighter tomorrow.

Each day, I am inspired by the encouraging messages of hope and determination I have received from people across the country. With the magnitude of challenges we face, we will only overcome them if our imagination is joined to common purpose.

The future we leave to our children and grandchildren will be determined by our willingness to shoulder each other's burdens, take great risks, and move forward as one people and one Nation. With your help, we will build on what we have already achieved and lay a new foundation for real and lasting progress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be Barack Obama's signature, consisting of a large, stylized 'B' followed by a circular flourish and a horizontal line extending to the right.