

Governor of Connecticut
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT. 06106

January 13, 2017

Dear Governor Malloy,

As the new session of the Connecticut General Assembly has convened and the Governor's Budget is being prepared, we wanted to bring to your attention some positive developments in the advocacy community for those with intellectual and development disabilities.

The Council on Developmental Services advocates for all persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Connecticut. The Council's statutory duties include the responsibility to:

"...Recommend to the Governor and to the General Assembly such legislation as will in its judgment improve the care and training of persons with intellectual disability."

Pursuant to these responsibilities, in September 2016, the Council on Developmental Services unanimously voted to form an Advocacy Subcommittee, consisting of members of the Council and representatives from 9 different advocacy and stakeholders groups. Our goal was to find consensus on a set of principles our groups could agree on.

We have shared these principles with Commissioner Morna Murray, Deputy Commissioner Jordan Scheff, and Director of Legislative and Executive Affairs Christine Pollio Cooney. The following is a list of principles that was unanimously approved by both the Advocacy Subcommittee and the Council on Developmental Services.

1. Funding appropriated by the legislature should not revert to the General Fund when DDS identifies and implements efficiencies and cost savings. Such savings should be used to serve those on the waiting list for residential services.
2. The waiting list for residential services should be revised to ensure that it includes all DDS eligible individuals in need of residential services. Information about their needs should include the timing and type of services that are required to serve each individual.
3. A wide array of residential services should be made available by DDS to meet the very different needs of individuals with intellectual disabilities.
4. Employment and day services budget must include funding for the projected number of graduates on a full-time basis for the entire year. Individuals and families should not be left waiting for funding as individuals complete their last year of school.
5. Increase funding and availability for respite care in a variety of settings.
6. A fair wage for all direct care staff, both in the private and public sector.

7. The State of Connecticut should maximize the reimbursements it receives from the Federal government. Cuts to DDS funding generally result in the loss of approximately \$ 50 of Federal revenue for each cut of \$ 100 in expenditures.

This is a crucial year to both protect the services for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities and find new ways to meet the unmet needs of thousands of families.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Adrienne Benjamin
Chair – Council on Developmental Services

Subcommittee members:

Velma Estes – 1199 Our Families Can't Wait & Parent
Jaime Lazaroff - Council on Developmental Services & Self Advocate
Fay Lenz - The Arc CT & Parent
Lauralyn Lewis - CT DDS Families First & Parent
Shelagh McClure – Chair, CT Council on Developmental Disabilities & Parent
Colleen McGill - Our Families Can't Wait & SEIU 1199
Diana Mennone - Council on Developmental Services & Sibling of Southbury resident
Arlene Reith - Council on Developmental Services & Parent
Richard Rothstein - CT DDS Families First & Parent
Cindy Stramandinoli - Lower Fairfield Regional Center & Parent
Kevin Zingler - Council on Developmental Services & Executive Director MARC of Manchester