

Good Afternoon, my name is Amy Dudek and I am a registered voter in Norwich. I would like to thank you for listening to my testimony. I am a proud Advocate for one of the Independent Living Centers which is Disabilities Network of Eastern CT. I am testifying before you today to ask you to save the funding for all five Independent Living Centers. In my advocacy work, I have helped many consumers who are disabled and have limited income to achieve their goals. I have been able to assist with necessary items such as ramps, stair lifts, & grab bars. Currently I am working with a consumer who wants to return to school to take a computer class so she can use the skills she is learning to be gainfully employed. Recently I assisted an elderly woman with having her wheelchair lift fixed for her car, which will allow her to be more independent so she can get to the doctors, the grocery store, and other places she needs to go. I just met a consumer who was born with an extra skeleton, who I am hoping to assist with some assistive technology devices so she will be able to go home instead of having to stay in a skilled nursing facility. Some of my consumers are not able to read or write and I am able to assist them with their paperwork from Social Security and other important documents as well. I also recently assisted a consumer with MS who needed help applying for the Long-Term Service Support Waiver so she can have necessary help in her home. These are just a few examples of the consumers I am able to help if I have the necessary funding needed.

I also want to say that I am proud to work with a great team of advocates with their own expertise some of which include vocational services, interpreting services, and American Sign Language Classes. As a team we are able to assist our consumers to meet their goals to be as independent as possible in their communities. Please save our funding so we can continue to help others. Thank you for listening!