



## KEY HUMAN SERVICES

Administrative Offices  
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Good afternoon Representative Walker, Senator Osten and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Elizabeth Weiblen and I'm the CEO of Key Human Services, Inc. (KHS). For 30 years KHS has been serving as a change agent, creating opportunities that encourage growth and meaningful life choices, while assisting in finding home, health, friends, work and presence in the community for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities across Connecticut.

Connecticut's projected surplus continues to grow and the growth is projected to be sustained over time. According to the Office of Policy & Management's November 2019 Fiscal Accountability Report, Connecticut's budget surplus will be a cumulative \$5.154 Billion by Fiscal Year 2024 and the state's Rainy Day Fund will be filled to its statutory capacity of 15% by Fiscal Year 2021.

For the last 13 years the Executive and Legislative bodies of the State of Connecticut have made the choice to not fund the nonprofits at a level that would keep pace with inflation. As a result Key Human Services and our sister agencies have been underfunded by approximately \$461 million.

I am here to ask that the legislature appropriate \$461 million over five years for community nonprofits. Since 2007, community nonprofits have lost at least \$461 million in state funding that has not kept pace with inflation or adequately covered increased costs and demand for services over the last thirteen years. Please:

- Commit to increasing funding by the full \$461 million, or 28%, by Fiscal Year 2025;
- Appropriate \$128 million (a state net of \$67 million after federal reimbursement) in new funding for community nonprofits in Fiscal Year 2021, a 7% increase;
- Index increases to inflation, to ensure that state funding will keep pace with increased costs in the future.

With an unprecedented amount of savings in the state's coffers and surpluses' projected into the future can the Legislature continue to justify policy choices that keep non-profits funded at levels that have not kept pace with inflation since 2007?

I am asking that you reach across party lines and make the necessary legislative changes to allow you to implement this 5 year plan.

Today there are more than 2,000 people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities languishing on a waiting list for services. In these economic times can the Legislature continue to tell its residents that it cannot meet their family's needs?

This week I received a letter from a Social Worker from a local hospital that I would like to share with you. (I have changed names and addresses for privacy reasons.)

*"We had the pleasure of working with the excellent staff of the house at "Your Town" when one of their residents, was recently treated on our unit. During "Your Constituents" weeklong stay, he was visited daily, consistent phone communication was demonstrated, and staff even came here (not a short drive) for a drop off of clothes and a quick hello. The "Your Constituent" never wondered where his staff was, what was going on at home. That connection is so important.*

*In our field, it is sometimes the sad case that once a patient is in the hospital, staff can be out of sight, out of mind. In fact, it is sometimes the norm with our most vulnerable patients. It was clear this individual is a valued, loved, and well cared for "family member" at his house. Seeing such engaged, patient centered care, was refreshing and I wanted to make sure to send a note of deep gratitude for excellent collaboration."*

This is an example of who we are and the quality of service that we provide in your communities. The non-profit sector has been pushed to the financial breaking point over the last decade and yet we continue to do our best to meet the needs of those that rely on us.

We were told for the last decade that you could not increase our funding because the state was in a financial crisis, now the state is seeing record surplus and you are again saying to us that you cannot increase our funding.

Distinguished members of the appropriations committee, I join my sister agencies in the room tonight in asking you.....If not now, when?

Thank you for your time and consideration,

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