

Public hearing

H.B. 5005 An Act Adjusting the late budget for the Biennium ending June 30, 2021

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Formica, Representative Lavielle, and distinguished members of the Appropriation Committee.

My name is Margaret Osiecki and I live in Avon Ct. I am a parent to two wonderful young men with Down Syndrome Matthew 24 years old and Michael 18 years old. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on H.B 5005 An Act Adjusting the State Budget for the Biennium ending June 30, 2021.

I oppose the Governors recommended 1 million cut to the Community Residential Services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Any funds saved when an individual chooses to move from a higher cost settings to a lower cost settings should be used to serve people who are on the waiting lists for residential supports. I also oppose the Governors recommended 2 million cut to Behavioral Services Program which provides support to families and individuals age 8 to 21 with intellectual disability with a serious and persistent mental disorders that substantially interferes with their functioning in family or community activities.

I support the CT Community Nonprofit Alliances request that the legislature appropriate 461 million over five years for community nonprofit. Since 2007, community nonprofits have lost at least 461 million in state findings that has not kept pace with inflation or adequately covered increased cost and demand for services over the last thirteen years.

This has resulted in programs closures, waiting lists and staffing shortages that impact on the lives of people with IDD and the support they rely on to live in the community.

The cuts that affected our family 3 years ago were very difficult to deal with. My son Matthew after finishing high school did not have a program to go to. For 8 months we struggled between our work schedules and watching over Matthew, It was getting to a point between having job and staying home with our son. Thankfully the day program was restored and our lives stabilized. Matthew attends day program at Favarh where he enjoys working for meals on wheels, Red cross, Avon Senior Center and other job sites. It is where he meets his new friends and enjoys the social aspect of his life. These programs are the live line for Matthew and kids like him. This type of funding provide support which goes far beyond the dollar value. They save lives and families.

The moral test of any institution whether marriage or government is how that institution treats those that are the least of its members so please don't take away from our most vulnerable populations. Please fight for them not against.

Sincerely

Osiecki Family