

Testimony to the Appropriations Committee

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, Representative France and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Jeremy Serow, a resident of CT and brother to a disabled special needs adult who is supported by the Department of Developmental Disabilities, DDS. I am grateful for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 6439, CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2023 AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.

As the brother of a disabled special needs adult, I am speaking on her behalf and on behalf of our family. Through the agencies supported by DDS my sister is able to maintain a job, participate in extra curricular activities such as sports activities including Special Olympics. Having the access and ability to participate in all of these programs adds value, joy, fun and pride to my sister's life and I could not imagine her in a world without the additional support and programs DDS is able to provide through adequate funding. We must always ensure we are able to adequately support people like my sister to provide the highest quality of life possible for these valuable members of society. They rely on us to support and be there for them.

My sister relies on support through MARC, Inc. of Manchester, (a member of the ARC of CT), and JCL, who are agencies both supported through DDS funding. Without adequate and essential funding being provided by DDS to these 2 non-profit agencies, my sister would not be able to function and continue as a happy, healthy and working member of our great State of CT.

Through MARC, Inc., JCL, and other agencies such as these supported through DDS, which my sister should always be able to rely on, help support her to work and to grow as an adult resident of CT and a contributing member to our community and State. It is imperative we always ensure there is adequate funding to DDS so they are able to continue and support the vital agencies that rely on them and ultimately support valuable but vulnerable members of our community such as my sister.

PLEASE increase the funding to DDS in order to ensure the continuity of services to provide fair and equitable wages to the very important, dedicated and valued staff who arrange the necessary and much appreciated services to our disabled, special needs individuals.

Your support of our intellectually and developmentally disabled community is vital.

Thank you for your support.

Respectfully,

Jeremy Serow
149 Palmer Drive
South Windsor, CT 06074