

**February 18, 2009**  
**Appropriations Committee Public Hearing Testimony**  
**Judy Henderson**  
**Sister and Conservator of a Brain Injury Survivor**

Good afternoon Chairpersons Geragosian, Harp, and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Judy Henderson. I am a former member of the Board of Directors of the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut (BIAC), and I currently work with BIAC as a part-time communications consultant. However, I am here today as the sister and conservator of a brain injury survivor currently on the ABI Waiver to speak in support of both adding and funding a minimum of 100 new ABI Waiver slots.

My brother is one of the lucky few who not only survived his brain injury, but survived it with minimal obvious disability. Unfortunately, severe short-term memory impairment interferes with his ability to function safely on his own, perseveration prevents him from maintaining a schedule or holding a full-time job, disinhibition makes it impossible for him to work even part-time or interact socially without supervision, and damage to his "executive function" — the cognitive system that controls other cognitive processes — undermines his ability to solve problems, make judgments, and organize his thoughts and actions, leaving him highly disorganized and uniquely vulnerable. As a result, my brother is intelligent, personable, good-looking — and completely unable to take care of all but his most basic needs.

Thankfully, he was approved for the ABI Waiver just a year after my mother's death, eliminating the potential for institutional care — and thanks to that Waiver, he is

of a million dollars per individual per year.

- Approve and fund slots for the 20 survivors already on the ABI Waiver waiting list, and the savings will total nearly \$5 million a year.
- Approve and fund all 100 new slots requested, and Connecticut stands to save as much as \$25 million annually.

Two years ago, the Legislature recognized these facts, approved additional slots, and provided additional dollars to fund those slots. Unfortunately that money was utilized elsewhere, and so I'm back. But this time, I'm not here simply to remind you that approving and funding 100 additional slots on the ABI Waiver is the kind thing to do and the right thing to do for those whose lives have been shattered by a brain injury. It's also the smart thing to do for Connecticut.

Thank you.