



Advocates for people with intellectual disabilities  
and related developmental disabilities

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September 3, 2009

**Testimony before the Committees on Public Health and Human Services**

**Re: Privatization and Relocation of Services Provided by Department of  
Developmental Services**

by

**Lynn Warner, Executive Director/The Arc of Connecticut**

Senator Harris, Representative Ritter, Senator Doyle, Representative Walker,  
and Members of the Public Health and Human Services Committees:

I am Lynn Warner, Executive Director of The Arc of Connecticut, a 57-year-old statewide advocacy organization for individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families. We have 23 local chapters that provide supports, services, and advocacy for individuals with intellectual disabilities throughout Connecticut.

The Arc of Connecticut is here today to testify in support of the **Privatization of Services Provided by the Department of Developmental Services** as long as adequate and appropriate funding for the Private Providers is transferred as well. The Arc of Connecticut has long believed that the health and well being of individuals are better met when an independent agency is overseeing their care – such as the Private Provider system. However, our concerns, as always, remain with the individuals whose lives will be impacted by this process.

Expecting the private provider system to take on more responsibility without adequately funding already existing services is devaluing everyone – individuals as well as the service providers. While private providers do extraordinary work – their work needs to be fairly and consistently compensated thereby allowing the needs of all the individuals in their care to be fully met.

**The Arc/Connecticut, Inc. Member Chapters:** Futures, Inc., Middletown / Greater Enfield Arc / Family Options, Watertown / Arc of Farmington Valley / Friends of New Milford, Inc. / Litchfield County Arc / LOV-Arc, Westbrook / MARC, Inc., Manchester / MARC: Community Resources, Portland / Arc of Meriden-Wallingford / Arc of Greater New Haven / Arc/New London County / Options, Unlimited / Arc of Plainville / Arc of Quinebaug Valley / SARAH Inc., Gullford / SARAH Seneca Residential Services / SARAH Taxis Residential Services / STAR, Norwalk / Arc of Southington / Tri County Arc, Columbia / Waterbury Arc / WeCAHR, Danbury

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Fears involving quality of care, appropriate supports, and adequate services are valid fears when there isn't enough money appropriated to alleviate them. Please take these fears into consideration as if these transitions involved your own family member or loved one.

The Arc would strongly recommend individual planning with each and every person involved in this privatization process and significant transition planning needs to be part of that plan.

Additionally, The Arc of Connecticut would like to remind the Legislature of the significant needs of individuals **stuck** on the residential services lists to be taken into consideration. New funding no longer exists and the Department of Developmental Services Waiting List and Planning Lists will continue to grow as a result of reduced availability of services.

While we fully understand the difficult situation the State of Connecticut currently finds itself in and recognize it will remain this way for a considerable amount of time -- cutting corners on the backs of some of the most vulnerable citizens in Connecticut and with the people who are expected to care for them is not the way to get the work done. It is not the way to balance a budget. There are better ways.

Thank you for your attention to this very complex and difficult matter.