

Please submit for the record for the
Human Services Committee
Hearing of March 11, 2010

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To: The Appropriations Committee
Re: DDS budget; attendance-based reimbursement system

My daughter, Margot Brady, has severe-profound retardation, cortical blindness, a seizure disorder, cerebral palsy, etc. etc. She is now 23 years old and has been the recipient of both good and bad support systems arranged by DDS over the years. She is currently in a great residence and also a day program run by Harc, Inc. We are blessed to have them on our side.

DDS announced, by edict last month, that it plans to meet its budget reductions, in part, by replacing its system of annual-contracting for services and implementing a **new fee-for-service system** this month. That system would provide payment for participants only on days that they actually attend the program. That is nonsense.

DDS suddenly requires a 90% attendance for full funding of an individual's day program. Margot's attendance rate, however, is only about 85% - due to sicknesses, medical appointments, hospitalizations, and weather. But Harc has to maintain staffing, programming, overhead, and everything else - whether Margot arrives there or not on any particular day. The Margots of the world, the population served by community-providers, are - by definition - a fragile group. No one can promise they will be anywhere 90% of the time.

The community-providers are already held together by chewing-gum-and-baling-wire: they are manipulated and under-funded, year after year. DDS's move is not only a wrong-headed approach, it also goes against the **rate study legislation** which we are all hoping will address imbalances that go back a generation.

Please do what needs to be done to halt this train-wreck.

With kindest regards,

Msi Megan O'Neill

Pc: Public Health Committee, LOB Rm. 3000, 06106-1591