

Burns, Vanessa

From: Lisa Simone [lisasimone10@yahoo.com]

Sent: Monday, February 28, 2011 9:55 PM

To: AppropriationTestimony

Dear Senator/Representative :

I am writing in regards to Senate Bill 387, An Act Consolidating Various State Agencies.

As a family member of a consumer served by BESB (the Board of Education and Services for the Blind), I strongly object to such a maneuver. BESB is the oldest agency serving blind people in the country, and is considered a model agency by many states.

My brother lost his sight five years ago due to complications with diabetes. He has been utilizing the BESB services through the state of Connecticut. If not for the services and counselors, he would not be living independently, sharing custody of his eight year old daughter and pursuing a career. I am a social worker, who has worked in private-non profits (funded by state services) so I know the importance of the individualized state agencies. I understand that there are areas that need to be focused on and potentially consolidated but not BESB. I wish the state would take a better look at the welfare system, not agencies that help the truly disabled, who are desperately trying to live and work independently. We waste so much money on individuals who do not have an interest in working and who are very content taking insurance and money from our state.

Please reconsider this decision!

Lisa Simone, MSW