



Advocates for people with intellectual disabilities
and related developmental disabilities

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Testimony before Committee on Appropriations
Re: Governor's H.B. #6380, An Act Concerning the Budget for the
Biennium Ending June 30, 2013

Second Vice President
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The Arc of Meriden-Wallingford
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by

Lynn Warner, Executive Director/The Arc of Connecticut

Secretary
Lori Baer
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Good afternoon Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and Members of the Appropriations Committee.

Treasurer

I am Lynn Warner the Executive Director of The Arc of Connecticut, a 59-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.

Immediate Past President
Ken Cholewinski
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I am here today to testify regarding, **H.B. 6380, An Act Concerning the Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2013** as it directly impacts the network of Private Providers in Connecticut and more importantly, **all** the individuals and families that they serve.

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For years the private providers have served these individuals with dignity and quality and yet for years private providers have been consistently underfunded. In addition, they continue to be subjected to unfunded mandates, lack of adequate cost of living increases and extensive rate changes.

Already the Private Providers are barely being funded enough to provide for health and safety needs of individuals, and we do not consider this an appropriate quality of life for the people in their care. Therefore, we are particularly concerned about Section 26 of H.B. 6380 that outlines the elimination of the allowable expenditures subject to cost settlement with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). The funds that are kept back through cost settlement are used for various needs of the agencies and individuals and private providers should be allowed to continue.

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

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Additionally, The Arc of Connecticut is concerned about the impact of the “user fee” that is proposed for ICF-MRs. There is conflicting language regarding a rate increase that is outlined in the Governor’s budget summary and language regarding a rate freeze in the legislation. Any reduction or freeze in funding again becomes potentially harmful for the individuals who rely on these supports.

On behalf of The Arc of Connecticut, I urge you to not cut the funding that is so vital for people in Connecticut. It is important for the Private Providers to remain a viable and efficient option for care – *especially* in a time when services and supports are needed more than ever, but more importantly so that people have genuine lives. Everyone is tightening their belts and doing without the extras these days – wants are being measured against needs and that is understandable. But to take away what is so desperately *needed* is inexcusable. If more positions go unfilled or eliminated that would sacrifice care from the individuals’ dependent upon that care everyday as a “cost of doing business” or as a “shared sacrifice” outcome, this would be in nobody’s best interest or worth a penny of savings. To take away needed services is simply an injustice to people of Connecticut with intellectual disabilities, their families, and people who support them.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.