



**TESTIMONY**

**Appropriations Committee Public Hearing**

**February 22, 2012**

**Hannah Jurewicz, Senior Director**

**Dungarvin CT, LLC**

**RAISED BILL NO. 5014: AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO STATE**

**EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2013.**

Good evening Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and other members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Hannah Jurewicz and I am Senior Director with Dungarvin CT.

Dungarvin provides residential and day services for individuals with intellectual and related disabilities throughout the state. The adults we serve live in homes in Torrington and the Greater Waterbury area, Southington, Hartford, Canton, Windsor and Windsor Locks, Plymouth, Manchester, and Greater New Haven. We support them as they perform meaningful work in these communities; we assist them when they contribute to the commerce of their towns by shopping, dining, and enjoying various recreational interests.

Like other organizations, Dungarvin is more than a community provider. We are an employer; we provide jobs for adults interested in serving their communities, filling the lives of those we serve with dignity and respect, and protecting them and advocating on their behalf. Our employees, like those with my sister and brother providers, are voting constituents within their communities. And of course, they work and support commerce as well.

The 1% COLA targeted to wages and benefits starting January 2013 is a strong first step toward addressing the critical deprived-funding level that has plagued our industry for years. I strongly

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urge you to consider extending that 1% COLA to become effective July 2012. It would strengthen our workforce and support their provision of safety net services.

As we all know, despite consistently flat funding, the cost of living has escalated at an alarming rate. According to a recent DOL report, the cost of healthcare has increased 6.5%, utility and gas prices risen 6.1%, and food prices 4.4%. Agencies have had to freeze wages, reduce or eliminate contributions to healthcare, scale back operations and services, and defer recommended capital improvement projects, just to keep their doors open. Please support a reliable funding system that recognizes the rising cost of services and of doing business; especially that of healthcare.

Agencies, individuals we serve, and their families and guardians, need a funding system that supports provider infrastructure and fiscal stability: One with consistent accountability standards and processes across the state agencies, across regions, across services.

I appeal to you, members of the Appropriations Committee, to consider that private providers and the individuals they serve are more than the agencies they represent, but citizens who live, work, and support the economy of CT.

We thank you for your time and attention.

**Hannah Jurewicz**

Senior Director