

From: Ethel Miller-Reith
35 Judson Place
Ansonia Ct 06401

Sent: February 19, 2013

To The Representatives of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Ethel Miller- Reith I am a volunteer and a Board Member for the Disability Resource Center of Fairfield County. I'm here tonight to testify as a concerned citizen who has witnessed over the years, the valuable and at times heroic activities that the Disability Resource Center accomplishes carrying out their mission for people with disabilities. The stories of this community and their life experiences are so important to communicate. A simple ramp can make the difference between people being home bound or joining in Community activities one of the many important services that the Disability Resource Center provides. We are obligated to bring an understanding of the concerns that this community deals with on a daily basis to the people who make important decisions regarding their lives.

We have just come through two storms, Hurricane Sandy and the Blizzard of 13. The Disability Community will have to go through another storm, a financial one if their funding sources are taken away. Governor Dan Malloy and our Mayors spoke on TV, telephone and radio giving us information on how to survive the storms without electric and impassable roads. We were asked to check in on our neighbors, senior citizens and people with disabilities, for they are the most vulnerable. This is why I am here today asking that funding be reinstated. The Independent Living Centers are there everyday providing services to empower people with disabilities to live life fulfilling their dreams and goals. I would like to finish this evening with the recent story of a fifteen year old teenage boy named Jack Andraka. Jack won the 2012 Smithsonian American award for inventing a method to detect a lethal cancer. Jack was so saddened by the loss of his uncle to pancreatic cancer that he invented a ground breaking, very inexpensive test that detects early on, with a slip of paper pancreatic cancer. Jack will save countless lives because he was innovative and creative and he cared about his family and people who are ill. I told you Jack's story tonight not only because it is amazing but because many young people have family members with a disability and these cuts will affect the well being of the whole family. Please let us follow Jack's lead and restore the funding for the Independent Living Centers. Thank you for listening to my concerns and for your service to our State.

Sincerely
Ethel-Miller-Reith