

Testimony to be given on February 18, 2014 to the Appropriations Committee

My name is Carl Noll, I am from Fairfield, I am an alumnus of the University of Connecticut, and have two sons with severe mental challenges who are served by the Department of Developmental Services. I am also an advocate for all like-challenged people.

After rescinding around 25 million dollars from the then existing 2011-2012 DDS budget in January of last year, it was decided to cut an additional 4.3% from the 2013-2014 DDS budget. The total amount of these two actions was in the area of \$50 million dollars.

We, the advocates of these people are always encouraged, and encourage others, to seek out our state legislators, both senators and representatives, and inform them of our challenges. We do this, we are always told that they feel for us, and are on our side, and then when it becomes crunch time, that is, when the budget is presented for review and passage they vote to eliminate more DDS funds.

Another part of the 2013-2014 financial plan included new spending for construction at UConn in the area of 1.5 to 2 billion dollars. Up to 2 billion dollars for the state university. 50 million dollars in cutbacks for DDS programs which serve citizens of this state who will never appreciate anything from the near 2 billion budgeted for UConn. The end of the intellectual spectrum which includes the gifted, many of whom will attend UConn were taken care of, while the people at the other end of that spectrum, those who are relatively helpless, except for the commitment of their advocates, were subject to a 50 million dollar decrease in the funding that they require to be able to live from day to day. My sons and others like them have the same right to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness that is guaranteed to all people in the Declaration of Independence, as do the young people who in the future will take advantage of the facilities that the 2 billion dollars provided to UConn will create.

Since it is my alma mater, I am all for the expansion of the University of Connecticut, but would you please see to it that these people are taken care of well??

I implore you to eliminate this inequity by restoring these budget cuts to the DDS budget line items 620 And 621, while recognizing that with over 6000 people on the DDS waiting list that this is only the beginning of the expenditures required over the next few years. Having recently heard that there is currently a surplus in the state's budget funds approaching 500 million dollars, I would strongly urge the legislature to consider, as a start, rescinding the rescission that the Governor made in the DDS Budget last January, and restore the cuts which were implemented in the 2013-2014 budget. This would amount to around \$50 million dollars..

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