

Testimony to the Appropriations Committee
February 18, 2014

My name is Zeb Olko from Enfield. I am here today to speak for others and myself with intellectual disabilities. We are the state's residents that are treated with the least respect or value. We all have dreams and goals just like anyone. We need supports and services to help us become as independent as possible. DDS calls it "Living the Mission." How can that be possible without funding? I attended George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. and majored in communications. I had the honor and privilege to intern on Capitol Hill for Senator Blumenthal, Congressman Greg Harper (MS) and Senator Steve Stockman(TX). I went to school out of state because there is no university or college in Connecticut that will admit a student with Down syndrome. My high school told me that I could not go to college because I had a disability. I told them that they could not tell me what to do. It was my life. I had to live my mission out of state. I am asking that this committee increase funding to help all of us "live the Mission" in CT. We are employees, taxpayers and registered voters. We have voices and we MATTER!

Respectfully submitted,

Zeb Olko