

Testimony from Edward and Claire Trengrove
160 Dennison Ridge Drive Manchester CT 06040

March 18, 2014

First and foremost, we are writing to you to ask you to support the House Bill No. 5534. AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES.

We are the parents of our 39 year old daughter, Jennifer Trengrove. Jennifer was born with developmental disabilities and is a client of DDS.

Her needs are extensive. She cannot be left alone at anytime. Her disability requires that someone be with her at all times. Jen needs help with everything, from dressing, toileting, bathing, eating, walking, communication, etc. Since Jen is non-verbal and doesn't have her voice to advocate for herself, she needs us to represent her needs.

We have been her primary caregivers for all of her 39 years. Now that we both have reached 65 years old, we become increasingly concerned about what the future holds for Jennifer. Specifically, we are concerned about where Jennifer will live and who will care for her, once we are no longer able to continue our present level of care. We cannot leave such an important decision unresolved, and then find ourselves in a crisis situation for her care.

WHERE WE NEED HELP

We need help with finding suitable living accommodations for Jennifer, where she can reside safely and be cared for properly. The current level of funding for DDS is insufficient to meet Jennifer's need for housing and care. We want to see increased DDS funding and attention to the need for more permanent housing arrangements for the disabled. If we are not pro-active and take steps now to find suitable housing for Jen, we know that she would become an emergency placement someday. Did you know that DDS continues to tell parents like us, that in reality, for Jennifer to get residential placement we would both have to die first? This is our worst nightmare, since she will be uprooted from the only home and family that she has ever known and placed somewhere that is strange and frightening to her. Even though Jennifer is an adult in chronological years she is at an emotional level of about a 6-7 year old. Imagine uprooting YOUR 7 year old child or grandchild and forcing them to live in a strange home with strange people, at the same time of coping with the death of their parents. We can't imagine that this scenario would be acceptable to any of our legislatures ,BUT THIS IS WHAT YOU ARE ASKING US TO DO TO OUR CHILDREN WHEN YOU CHOOSE NOT TO INCREASE FUNDING TO DDS SO THEY CAN MEET THE URGENT NEEDS OF THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED.

Please support House Bill No. 5534 so we can help people like our Jennifer who need our help the most.

Sincerely,

Edward and Claire Trengrove 860-643-7046