

Ferne McAllister 5534

Please support H.B. No. 5534 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES.

I SUPPORT this bill and I hope that you will too!

We have an 18 year old who has intellectual disabilities, schizophrenia, and also has autism spectrum disorder. There is no way we will be able to care for him as we age. We fostered and adopted this child through CT DCF, and were told not to worry about his future, that the state would be there for us. We need funding for work supports, group homes, residential programs and social services as these young adults have a variety of needs and we need creative solutions to help all of them, not just our child. It sickens me that there are thousands on a waiting list for homes, as their aged caregivers are desperate for relief, with no home in sight. Until you have raised a child with special needs, you have no idea of the financial, emotional and social burdens it places upon the caregivers. Our personal financial future is bleak as I have not worked outside of the home as my children (both adopted) have required my full attention and care, often around the clock. We can barely survive on one income and there is no money for us to fund alternative living for our children. Please understand that many of the children with intellectual disabilities also have other difficulties, whether mental health, physical or medical, so there are a vast range of programs that need funding. It is beyond cruel that our children would be placed "somewhere" upon the death of the last caretaker - not only would they be in mourning, but also would most likely have their work (if any work is left for them with the underfunding), their church, friends, and everything familiar would be torn from them. Planning and transition to an appropriate setting while the parents are still alive to help with the transition is far more humane.

Please provide funding for our children, and support HB 5534.

Thank you so very much.

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