

We are the custodial grandparents of 23-year old Matthew, who was shaken by a babysitter at 7 months of age and has suffered subsequent developmental delays, cortical blindness, and cognitive delays. He is a delightful young man who has a job in the dishroom at ECSU with the help of his coaching staff from Camp Horizons in S Windham, Ct. They would love to work with us to place him nearby with other peers in a residential setting so that he can move on with his life like any other young adult. My husband and I are nearing our 70's and have not at this point been able to "retire" and move on with our lives either. Soon we will have each other to take care of and worry that we will no longer be able to meet Matthew's needs. He needs residential placement with supervision.

The Wait List obtained from DDS through the Freedom Of Information Act states that there are 75 people on the "Emergency list" and 1450 people on the "Priority 1" list. At the last ID/DD caucus meeting, DDS reported only 37 people on the "E" list and 578 on the P1 "list". Where did the other people go? The fact is, the administration at DDS is playing with the numbers and is now saying that if anyone is receiving any kind of support, they are not being counted as waiting for residential placements. Thus the difference in numbers.

Our Families Can't wait has introduced HB5534 which holds DDS accountable for their commitment to help those who can't speak for themselves. This distancing themselves from our most vulnerable population has been going on for far too long. Please support this bill so that we can at least put a band-aid on this in a timely manner and then begin to work together to plan for a long-term solution to this complex problem of residential supports. Please support HB5534.

Frank & Denise King
Matthew King
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