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Distinguished Member of Public Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of SB 1088. An act concerning services for individuals with intellectual disabilities. It is because of an impending crisis that I ask you to not let these devastating cuts to DDS occur. Thousand of families throughout Ct. will be effected. Many may loose their jobs because they need to stay home with their loved one. If this occurs the welfare rolls will increase as will services within DSS. People with ID/DD will not receive services that ensure their needs are being met. Children graduating from school will not have vocational or day programs to attend. All the work that has been done with these individuals within the school system will be lost over time. Progress in many areas will turn to regression. Behaviors and illness will increase in families as the stress of 24 hr care for a loved one with ID/DD becomes overwhelming. I can attest to this as a parent of a son with ID/DD. The stress can be overwhelming and take it's toll on the family both emotionally and physically. I worked, had six children and somehow managed to survive. Closing Southbury, and Regional Centers is the most cost efficient way to handle the decreasing revenue and budget deficit in Ct. The cost of maintaining a person within these facilities could help many more DDS clients who wait for services. The cost of running a state facility is overwhelming. Benefits, wages and maintaining of these facilities is too costly for a state in financial crisis. We must make the move from state run facilities to private in order to not only serve more people but to do the right thing by those who have been institutionalized for many year. They deserve to be part of the community and would blossom within their communities. Institutions were a thing of the past they have no place in the 21st century. Please stop these cuts and help expedite the closing of these outdated institutions.

Thank you for your consideration and your hard work,

Joanne Ouellette