

H.B. No. 6824 : An Act Concerning The State Budget for The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2017,

Submitted by: Jamie Lazaroff, Self Advocate Coordinator, Arc Quinebaug Valley, Secretary, Council on Developmental Services

March 6, 2015

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Jamie Lazaroff I am a Self Advocate Coordinator for The Arc Quinebaug Valley, a non-profit agency that provides support and advocacy for children and adults with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities and their families , I am the Secretary to the Council on Developmental Services and I also work with Arc CT on advocacy issues.

I would like to address three critical points from the Governor's proposed budget that will impact the lives of individuals with ID/DD and their families.

Massive cuts to Day Supports:

If Implemented, The Governor's budget will eliminate funding for Day Supports for all new graduates thus creating a new Waiting List for Day Services.

These cuts will impact the graduates and their families because there won't be any new services in June 2015 as well there may be no new placements at all next year.

60% cuts to Voluntary Services Program (VSP) for Children and Adolescents.

If implemented, the Governor's budget will cut VSP by \$20million in July 2015. The DDS VSP supports children and adolescents with Pervasive Developmental Disorders such as Autism Spectrum and/or significant behavioral health or psychiatric disorders and extremely challenging behaviors. These cuts will be devastating to families who need the supports.

No Waiting List Funding:

If the Governor's budget is implemented, more than 2,000 individuals with I/DD and their families will continue to wait with no hope and no plan for receiving services in the absence of an emergency or death.

Last year the Governor and legislators started to take steps in the right direction to address the residential Waiting List crisis by redirecting \$4 million in the DDS budget to provide supports for people in the waiting list. The Governor's budget does not include any funds to provide supports for people in the Residential Waiting List.

**CLOSE SOUTHBURY TRAINING SCHOOL
AND THE REGIONAL CENTERS
PUT THE MONEY BACK INTO THE DDS BUDGET**