

Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee: After nearly three years of advocacy since the massive cuts of \$50 million, it is clear that the situation of clients of the historically underfunded DDS has grown even more desperate and represents for their families clear and present risks to health and well being. Evidence to this end has been amply presented and overwhelming in its documentation! This debate now transcends

numbers and fiscal issues. ___The current budgetary treatment of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities reveals a stark ignorance of both extant human needs and the impending human cost if the present Administration budget carries.____The issue to legions of us parents who know well where state funds are being profligately spent, as verified in the public press, becomes one of blatant moral turpitude. Indeed our issues with this budget, we declare, rise to the level of monumental civil rights violations and discriminatory fiscal practices inexplicably perpetrated against the IDD community. After reams of testimony and years of remonstrations, there exists no compelling evidence to the contrary.

The DDS has nearly 22,000 clients who are fiscally second-class citizens in the dismal calculus of the OPM. Sadly, the Executive appears unmoved or has been tragically misinformed. It now behooves the General Assembly to restore the purpose and reputation of all good government as an entity which promotes the general welfare of ALL its people and ensures JUSTICE to them ___irrespective of race, religion, sexual orientation or level of SOCIAL, INTELLECTUAL AND MEDICAL NEED! Anything less___and we see exactly this in the systematic decimation of DDS funding___is a system gone ethically bankrupt, accountable to the entire electorate, and guilty before God should harm befall any person with an intellectual disability whose lack of proper DDS supports create "risk of injury" of any variety.

We parents thus appeal to the Legislature and its both parties of conscience and plead with you___as the people's branch of government___ to use your plenary constitutional checks and balances with courage and resolve to protect and empower the IDD community toward its rightful pursuit of happiness and fulfillment. Respectfully, Joseph W. Duffy, M.A., M.S. ___Donna M. Duffy, R.N.