

To whom it may concern,

My name is JoAnn Forman and I live at 110 Griswold Drive in West Hartford, CT. with my husband and 30 year old daughter Emily who is intellectually disabled. I am writing to testify against the **Governor's proposed budget cuts to DDS**. We were fortunate that Emily received a quality education up through age 21 in West Hartford Public Schools. Support services upon graduation have been quite limited. Emily has been on the wait-list for housing support since she was 16. Most of her friends with special needs have been fortunate to have been placed in supported housing at a time when funding was more readily available. Emily talks all the time about having an apartment with staff like her friends, but sadly I don't see that dream becoming a reality for her. It saddens me to know that she will not live up to her potential as long as she remains at home with her parents. No child matures to their fullest potential under these circumstances. My husband Jeff and I are now in our 60's, and we worry every day about what will happen to Emily when we are no longer here to care for her. I know the needs are great and the expenses high, but it is the only right and moral thing to do. Individuals like Emily deserve a chance to live life to the fullest and know that they are valued. Please make DDS a priority and stop the cuts proposed by the Governor.

I have attended several meetings over the past year and I was encouraged by the work that Beth Bye and her committee have been doing. Sadly with this current budget proposal, I am feeling increasingly more discouraged and feel our voices and those of the committee have not been heard. I believe it doesn't have to be this way. Please be the voice for our children and provide them with the funding they deserve and so desperately need. Thank you. See you on Friday.

Sincerely,

**JoAnn Forman**