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March 2, 2015

Public Health Committee  
Legislative Office Building  
Public Hearing of SB 918, March 4th  
Hartford, Connecticut

To the Public Health Committee:

My name is Arlene Reith.. My husband, Tom, and I are adoptive parents of two children born with Down syndrome and dually diagnosed with Autism.. Our son, Gabriel, died with Leukemia at the age of 13 in 2007 leaving his sister, Sarah, who presently is 18 years old. Nearly 8 years ago we purchased property on Witter Road adjacent to our eldest son's home with the intention to build our retirement home.. My husband has recently retired, and our new home will begin construction this spring.. Sarah is all set to transition to Connecticut come this May.

**Please note that I am against the governor's budget for DDS, given that the governor's proposed budget would drastically cut funding for DDS services:**

Governor Molloy has used his rescission authority to cut \$13.9 million from DDS.. On February 18<sup>th</sup>, the governor announced his proposed budget for the next 2 years which would continue these cuts, adding more than \$20 million in additional cuts and wouldn't allocate any new funding for over 2000 people on the Waiting List, which is growing daily! More than \$42 million has been cut from DDS since 2012!

**I am standing alongside my constituents to send a message to legislators that **THESE CUTS CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE!****

We need the legislature to **restore the cuts and to increase funding for DDS in the 2016-17 budget.** We also them to **Pass SB 918** so that there is a sustainable plan for the future of services for all people with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities in the State of Connecticut..

How many children in Connecticut who were born (or will be born) with intellectual/developmental disabilities are up for adoption? Sadly, their chances of adoption will be scarce due to the uncertainty of their future.. The majority of these children may become victims of foster care, juggled around from family to family (which will be at the expense of the State).. How sad..

**PASS SB 918!**

Sincerely,  
Arlene Reith  
Parent/Advocate

Copies:  
Senator Paul M. Formica  
Senator Richard Blumenthal