

To Whom it May Concern:

Unfortunately, I will be unable to attend on Friday but wanted my voice to be heard.

My name is Donna Schneider and I live in Bethel, CT with 2 of my special needs children. I pride myself on being a single parent and providing as much as I can for my 2 children. But, there are things I can not provide and resources I do not have. The support my children receive from DDS, Vocational Rehab services as well as Ability Beyond are truly necessary. Without these supports, they would be sitting home on a couch not being productive members of the community and not feeling any self-worth, as well as placing additional burdens on myself for providing for their daily needs. I am 100% against the Governor's proposed budget cuts to DDS. I actually have to say the Governor was at Special Olympics Winter Games this weekend, supporting the people DDS provides for and I have to think was this just political grandstanding and a photo op. Does he really care about these individuals? How can he when he wants to decimate their programs and supports. Our neediest citizens are being forgotten. Why must these individuals who struggle everyday, have to fight to keep what they need? These cuts impact my children but also the individuals who I coach in Special Olympics. I see their struggles and can not imagine how these budget cuts will further increase their daily struggles. Why pick on those who have a limited voice? I don't know what the Governor is thinking I understand budgets and cuts and trying to balance a budget and I also understand we need to help out those in need and if raising taxes is necessary, we need to do it. I just want my children to access to programs that will make them be productive, teach them skills and become as independent as possible. I am requesting that the Appropriations committee stop these cuts to DDS, restore full funding to DDS as well as find the DDS waiting list. In addition, the cuts to Probate should also be restored as this is a service of great need for those individuals who have the lowest voice and least amount of financial resources. Please do the right thing.

Sincerely,

Donna Schneider