

Mitchell Siegel Testimony to Governor Malloy and the Connecticut state legislature

When my son Ryan was born, in Trumbull, Connecticut 26 years ago, I didn't know that we would become one the millions of families living with autism and Ryan would be one of the tens of thousands served here.

At that time in 1988, little was known of the disorder and the guidance and support that we so urgently needed was very hard to find. Through much perseverance and determination, we learned a great deal about autism and became strong advocates for our son. Today we continue to be strong advocates for Ryan and many other families struggling with autism. Please go to 'The Autism Community of Hope' to see the current advocacy efforts on behalf of families coping with Autism at www.early4autism.com.

Ryan is currently living in a CRS in Georgetown, CT and attending a vocational program- both supported by DDS and Ability Beyond. He is making great progress learning to become as independent as possible while living with ASD. Governor Malloy's planned cuts would be extremely detrimental to Ryan and those similar that depend on DDS support to bring quality and meaning to their lives and quest for independence.

It is with great distress that we view Governor Malloy's current budget proposal for 2014 to 2015. We view the Governor's cuts to DDS as unfairly targeting and discriminating against those with disabilities and demand that no cuts to DDS be implemented. We demand that the legislature reinstate the DDS budget for the state budget for 2014 to 2015.

We will fight this battle on our son's behalf and the millions of other families living with people with intellectual disabilities.

Sincerely,
Mitchell P. Siegel

The Autism Community of Hope
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