



Empowering those with intellectual and developmental disabilities to realize their dreams.

Testimony Submitted to the Appropriations Committee:

H.B. No. 6824: An Act Concerning The State Budget for The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2017, And Making Appropriations Therefor And Other Provisions Related To Revenue.

Submitted By: Jim Morrison, Acting CEO, MARC Community Resources

March 6, 2015

Senator Bye, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Jim Morrison and I am the Acting CEO for MARC Community Resources. MARC is a private, non-profit Agency that has been providing services to individual with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and their families for nearly 60 years. We are among the 500+ member agencies of the Connecticut Association of Nonprofits (CT Nonprofits.) as well as a chapter of The ARC Connecticut.

I would like to share my concerns with H.B. 6824, An Act Concerning The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2017, And Making Appropriations Therefor and Other Provisions Related to Revenue. In particular, I wanted to express my sincere concerns to the funding reductions in the Department of Developmental Services budget. This funding reduction would threaten critical services to individuals and families in our service area.

MARC provides essential vocational, residential and outreach services to over 200 individuals and their families and employs over 80 administrative, professional and direct support staff in the greater Middletown area. I have worked for MARC for over 25 years and for 20 of them have seen nothing but flat funding, budget cuts or rescissions. Despite this I have seen countless individuals flourish when given the opportunity to work and/or live in their communities alongside the rest of us. In my 25 years I have never been as fearful as I am now that many of these individuals and their families will lose or never have these opportunities because of the decimation to the system caused by the Governor's proposed cuts. An already fragile, underfunded system cannot sustain over \$46 million in cuts over the next 2 years. The extraordinary irony is that a properly funded private provider system would grow and thrive and in turn save the state millions of dollars currently being spent to sustain a very expensive state system providing the same services.

The proposed cuts, coupled with four rounds of rescissions/budget modification dating back to late 2012, have put enormous pressure onto an already severely depleted system. The reality is that nonprofit providers have been pushed to our breaking point due to the lack of investment over the past two decades. Chronic underfunding has already forced many nonprofits to close, compete against one another



MARC: Community Resources Ltd.
124 Washington Street
Middletown, CT 06457

860-342-0700 • Fax 860-342-1492 • www.marccommunityresources.org

Vocational & Leisure Services
421 Main Street, P.O. Box 100
Cromwell, CT 06416



for scarce resources, lay-off employees, reduce benefit packages; altogether creating a win or lose system that weakens the entire nonprofit sector and threatens its sustainability.

As members of the Appropriations Committee work toward creating your 'Recommended Budget' for SFY16 and 17, I urge you to restore these harmful cuts to ensure critical programs and services are available to the residents of Connecticut. I'd also like to respectfully remind you that investing in the nonprofit sector will improve service delivery, increase economic activity, and save taxpayer money; a "win-win" for policymakers working to strengthen the economy, the nonprofit workforce trying to make ends meet, and most importantly, the clients and their families who count-on efficient, cost-effective, and high-quality services.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, or for additional information at:

Jim Morrison, Acting CEO
MARC Community Resources
124 Washington St.
Middletown, CT 06457

860-342-0700 ext. 212 jim.morrison@marc-cr.org

