

I am submitting this testimony in support of Raised Bill Number 918- An Act Concerning the Provision of Services to Individuals with Intellectual Disability.

This bill would require the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to plan and provide services to individuals with intellectual disability who are eligible and in need of services, including individuals on the waiting list by July 1, 2017. The services include; community-based residential placements, respite care, emergency care, day programs, vocational services and in-home supports. The bill also requires DDS to identify the additional staff and cost required to provide the services.

My son, Mathieu Wicker, has profound mental retardation and severe autism. My fears are that although his circumstances and diagnosis will not be changing and his progress will be very slow, DDS is going to reduce his funding AGAIN.

The DDS budget has been cut by more than \$43 million since November 2012. Every budget, mitigation plan and ordered rescission since then has continued to reduce funds for community providers. These cuts are resulting in a chronic underfunding of the community providers supported by DDS to care for our most vulnerable citizens. It's time to establish a statewide plan to prioritize funding for individuals with intellectual disability and their families, community providers and direct care workers.

Sincerely,  
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