



Achieve with us.

"For people with intellectual, developmental and other life-affecting disabilities."

March 17, 2015

Dear Members of the Public Health Committee:

I am writing in support of Raised Bill No. 1088, An Act Concerning Services for Individuals with Intellectual Disability.

First I would like to thank Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and the members of the Public Health Committee for raising the bill and urge you to pass this out of your committee.

Connecticut is lagging behind other states in this country concerning providing services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Despite having an extremely large budget per capita, the number of individuals served is low. This is due to the two tiered system that Connecticut currently has. The cost of providing services in the public system is more than double the cost of the private sector. It has been proven over and over that the private provider system is more than capable of caring for all individuals despite their level of disability.

As more and more individuals move out of Southbury Training School, the cost per individual rises. Currently, it costs almost \$400,000 annually per individual at STS. The cost for these individuals in the private sector averages less than \$150,000 per annum. The numbers speak for themselves. Fifty percent of the DDS budget supports twenty-five percent of the individuals served. By closing state run facilities, moving individuals into the community and keeping the money saved in DDS, most individuals who need services would receive them.

Our agency currently supports an individual who lived at STS for approximately 50 years. She is thriving in the home that she lives in and her family is thrilled with how happy she is. Here is a direct quote from a family member, "I've been so impressed with the great strides Anne has made these past months. She is markedly more expressive, appropriately assertive, and obviously more confident. I can only credit these changes to the kindness, skillfulness, and careful attentiveness of your staff." Living in the community can work for everyone with the right supports.

I urge you to support this bill and to ask the Commissioner of DDS to plan for the closure of all state run facilities. Let's make Connecticut a leader in the area of intellectual and developmental disabilities instead of being stuck in the past. Look to the fourteen states that don't have any public run facilities and the ten states that have less than 100 individuals in institutions.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Susan M. Desrosiers'.

Susan M. Desrosiers
Executive Director