Dear Dear Legislators::

I'm asking you to support House Bill 5128. This bill will require that DDS keep any budget savings or lapses and make them available to serve unmet needs such as the DDS waiting lists! This is the "money stays in the DDS system" bill families have been wanting for years!

In the past three years, DDS has had over $50 million in cuts and now the Governor is proposing an additonal $47 million in cuts over the next two years. Our state can't continue to deplete these funds from our most vulnerable citizens, it not only hinders the individuals and their families, but also hinders our economy.

A long term plan must be developed that will support the non profit infrastructure to continue to provide affordable quality services to our most vulnerable. We can't keep looking for short term fixes that don't solve the problem. In doing so, it only continues the erosion of services leaving us with a system that could possibly collapse and definitely cost taxpayers even more.

This Bill is a first step to a long term solution and will allow monies that have already been budgeted to DDS to remain in DDS. To penalize non profit providers who have stayed within their already thin budget to support our family members is only hurting us all.

I would like to thank both Senators Gerratana and Ritter for raising Bill 5128, and I hope all of you unanimously supports this Bill that moves us in the right direction of supporting individuals with disabilities and building a stronger Connecticut.

Sincerely,

Susan Baccaro
33 Cranbury Drive
Trumbull, CT 06611