



State of Connecticut

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Testimony in Support of
SB294: An Act Concerning Services for Individuals with Intellectual Disability
Public Health Committee
March 2, 2016

Good day Chairman Ritter, Chairman Gerratana, Ranking Members Representative Srinivasan, Senator Markley, and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee. I want thank this committee for raising SB294: AN ACT CONCERNING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY.

One of the first things I did as a new legislator was join the I/DD bipartisan caucus. I was drawn to the message of support for our developmentally disabled, and still am honored to advocate for those the caucus supports.

It is with that passion that I support SB294 as a start in addressing some of the concerns voiced by the community—residential waiting lists, notification when state-assisted care is to cease, and the plan to close institutional centers.

I was encouraged when I read a few weeks ago that the Governor's office, according to the Hartford Courant (2/3), will "develop strategies to address and fund" the waitlist. You have an opportunity to provide him support in that endeavor by moving this legislation forward.

These waiting lists cause major hindrances for those who want to live in their community, have their independence, and secure a job. It is incumbent on us to see that our agencies and providers deliver services when needed, and that does not mean only upon the death of the caretaker.

The proposed legislation requires the Commissioner to update the waiting list not less than once every three years. It does not specify which list—residential, day service, behavioral services, or planning. It does not require any reporting to this committee on the status of the list(s), nor does it outline the information that will be updated. I respectfully request that language be included that will require the Commissioner to integrate all lists into one and provide the following data in a report to this committee:

- Redacted names
- Level of need
- Supports/services requested and timeline of when request needed
- Number of days/weeks/years on the waiting list

The need for this data is important for future planning around community infrastructure and supports the transparency of the process. Notification to families that includes details of services to be provided, modified, or terminated is paramount to long-term planning and I thank the committee for recognizing the importance of this communication by requiring the Commissioner to provide families with transparent and consistent information to help them with these services.

I look forward to working with this committee and the I/DD Caucus to address short-term and long-term policies through innovative changes that will allow our disabled to age in community-assisted settings.

Respectfully,

Pam Staneski
119th House District Representative