



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

**REPRESENTATIVE BRENDA L. KUPCHICK**  
ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-SECOND ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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**RANKING MEMBER**  
HOUSING COMMITTEE

**MEMBER**  
ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE  
INSURANCE COMMITTEE

Testimony in opposition to line items removed from Agency Budgets  
Department of Developmental Services  
Appropriations Committee

February 19, 2016

Dear Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Kane, Representative Ziobron, and honorable members of the Appropriations Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you in opposition to the Governor's proposed budget cuts to the Department of Developmental Services.

The Department of Developmental Services provides support to persons with developmental disabilities who live independently or reside in family homes, state-operated facilities, community training homes, and community living arrangements. DDS upholds the responsibility of planning and developing comprehensive and integrated services for Connecticut residents statewide. These services include residential placement and in-home support, employment programs, family support, case management, and periodic assistance with transportation. DDS is committed to building a strong and effective voice through mobilizing our communities and engaging with allies.

The Governor's proposed budget for the 2016 fiscal year would decrease funds the Department of Developmental Services requires to support the hundreds of individuals and families of Connecticut who are dependent on the services and support we provide. Section 1 of Senate Bill number 1601 reduces the total DDS allotment by cuts of approximately \$4.3 million to cooperative placements programs, clinical services, the behavioral services program, and supplemental payments for medical services. The deficit mitigation plan also removes \$5 million from DDS to reflect efficiencies achieved at the Southbury Training School and other DDS regional centers. It also includes additional administrative reductions that could potentially impact DDS: \$10 million in savings statewide due to reductions in overtime and \$3.5 million in savings statewide from delaying increases in raises for executive branch managers.

The reduction of costs has been a top priority of DDS as well as that State of Connecticut. DDS has addressed staffing patterns that do not meet the needs of residents, significantly reduced all fulltime first-shift positions across all residential settings, ensured that all residents are at their worksites or day programs as scheduled, continued analysis and systemic review of overtime costs and patterns, used temporary staff assignments to cover unanticipated staffing shortages, operated with minimum staffing rations, implemented downsizing of cottages, and reviewed the management of employee attendance issues.

The staff at DDS are mission-driven and dedicated to provided support and services to all those who qualify for assistance. Many DDS staff have spent decades providing quality services to individuals with intellectual disability and doing everything they can to provide these individuals with much-deserved opportunities. The commitment of this Department, and the families, providers, and individuals who require services deserve continued support. Together, we have a responsibility to come up with workable solutions, while balancing many equally important competing and compelling needs. I look forward to embarking on this challenge with each of you. Citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Connecticut deserve no less.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brenda L. Kupchick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B'.

Brenda Kupchick  
State Representative  
132nd District