

**Appropriations Committee Hearing - February 18, 2016  
House Bill No. 5044 AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO  
STATE EXPENDITURES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING  
JUNE 30, 2017**

Good Afternoon, Senator Bye and Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today in regards to House Bill No. 5044.

My name is Shamarr Baldwin. I have been a state direct worker for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities for the past 16 years. I do my best every day to give the highest level of care to my residence at the DDS facility in Newington. I care for people who aren't able to care for themselves. The people for whom I care depend on me for everything throughout the day. I assist them with all of their activities of daily living. After 16 years, many of them are like family to me. I have learned their needs and how to best care for them. When working with individuals with disabilities it is important to understand how paramount continuity of care is to them. What might seem like a small change in environment or daily interactions to you or me it is a catastrophic change for someone with intellectual disabilities.

These individuals struggle every day with the simplest tasks that you and I take for granted. Their life is very difficult and I do my best to help them make progress, become higher functioning and know they can count on me. Please don't make their already difficult lives even more difficult by breaking up the only home and family they have gotten to know. Many of the people for whom I care do not have relatives to advocate for them or speak on their behalf. My co-workers and I are often the only family they have which is why I am here on their behalf to implore you to not break up our family.