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February 17, 2016

Members of the Appropriations Committee
State of Connecticut Legislature

Dear Committee members:

Last night we attended a sobering meeting at Ability Beyond's offices in Bethel, Connecticut. We were there to support our daughter Maura who has Down's Syndrome and is a resident within the Ability Beyond organization. We oppose the Governor's fiscal year 2017 budget that proposes substantial funding cuts that will endanger the health and well-being of Maura.

There are many reasons we can offer and here are a few of the more important ones. Between Ability and us, Maura receives the best care and love she needs to carry on her life. Maura is not asking for anything else but she is aware of the importance of her family and Ability's efforts to care for her. Ability has done a wonderful job over the eight years Maura has been a resident. We support her and Ability as well, knowing the importance of daily hard work to maintain her well-being and happiness. Let us emphasize that Maura does not live above the financial and social means that you or we are used to, however she is happy and has a modest standard of living.

We understand that disproportional cuts in funding are proposed to fall on nonprofit organizations such as Ability. **How can such a proposal even be thought of?** We can attest to the many difficulties and efforts that all of us have expended during Maura's life but all were worthwhile. She is an exemplary citizen of Connecticut and a positive example to everyone.

We include you in this responsibility to aid Maura and beseech you to consider increasing the funding for Ability Beyond and other worthy non-profit agencies in Connecticut, certainly NOT to reduce your support.

Respectively submitted electronically,

Rosemary and Ed O'Malley

