

Statement of Donna Lee Haas on behalf of Jordan Richard Haas
Appropriations Committee
February 18, 2016

My name is Donna Lee Haas and my son, Jordan Richard Haas, of whom I am conservator, resides in Thomaston, Connecticut. He is currently a client of the Connecticut Legal Rights Project (CLRP) , availing of the services of Katrina Cessna following his entry on the Connecticut ABI Waiver list.

Jordan suffered a brain injury in 2012 and immediately following his injury, I put his name on the ABI Waiver list so that he could receive services following his accident. It took three years for him to become eligible for these services, which were certainly something he desperately needed since my husband and I did not know how to properly attend to his needs, nor could we afford the private facilities in the area. However, in the process of dealing with the Department of Social Services, we encountered one setback after another, mainly because of the changing of social workers assigned to his case.

After much frustration and desperation, I turned to CLRP because I needed a legal voice in this process if I wanted to get anything done. If it were not for Katrina and her involvement in Jordan's case, I'm certain that I would still be battling the red tape involved in getting Jordan the services he needed. And Katrina did not stop here but has also been actively involved in processing the necessary paperwork needed for Jordan's SSI benefits. Again, without someone to navigate the paperwork, it's almost impossible to get anything done, which is why CLRP is so important for so many.

I am happy to report that Jordan is making progress, and I know how much gratitude I owe CLRP and Katrina for their assistance. Knowing that this organization is in financial jeopardy is heartbreaking, not only for myself but for the multitudes of others left to fend for themselves. Organizations like CLRP act as a voice for so many who would otherwise be lost in the system, so I implore of you to put yourselves in the shoes of those less fortunate. Without CLRP, these masses have no voice and could prove to be an even bigger burden on the state when they either become a legal liability because of frustration or when they become wards of the state because no one was there to act as their proponent.