

I am commenting in support of bill HB 5128 whereby DDS would be allowed to retain unspent monies and thereby allocate those funds towards residential placement for individuals with intellectual/development disabilities.

It is well known that DDS has not received new funding for residential placement in 20 years except for a onetime allocation in 2015. The backlog for placement in private group home settings continues to grow, placing enormous strain on families with older care-giver parents. The lack of funds paralyzes any meaningful attempt to address the reality of the 900 plus individuals in state residential facilities such as Southbury who could be transitioned to private group homes at about half the overall cost. While there is much talk about cutting programs to balance the budget there is little willingness to admitting to the cost savings that would be created by transitioning individuals into private group homes. If DDS had access to monies unspent, private group homes could be created, 10 and up to 20 year waiting lists could be eliminated, and the overly expensive institutional care for those in state residencies could be substantially reduced.

I urge the legislature to vote in favor of HB 5128

Respectfully Submitted,

C. Edward Leach Jr. MD

Member, Board of Directors: MARC of Manchester

Member, Board of Directors: Arc of Connecticut