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**Testimony in Support of H.B. 5128, An Act Concerning Funds
Appropriated to the DDS**

My name is Shanon McCormick and I live in Pawcatuck. I am the parent of an 18-year-old son who has Down syndrome and I sit on the Board of Directors for the Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress (CDSC).

On my own behalf and on behalf of the CDSC, I wish to voice support for H.B. 5128. Retaining DDS budget savings within the department is critical to turning it around. Citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities are already under-served in Connecticut. Returning savings to the general fund will only make waiting lists longer, and further reduce DDS' ability to serve its clients.

Yesterday I supported my son as he worked on the career exploration part of his senior project. He is dreaming big dreams, as most high school seniors do. I do not have the heart to tell him that despite his hard work and all the support I and our community can muster, he may be living with me and my husband until we die; or that with every budget cut, and every reduction in services, it has become more likely that he will age out of our school district to days of sitting on the couch, endlessly watching TV. I can't begin to explain the waste and injustice of that outcome.

Failing to pass H.B. 5128 will only make matters worse than they already are for people who live with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Connecticut. I ask you to please move this legislation forward.