

Public Health Committee
Connecticut General Assembly
February 15, 2016

Testimony related to H.B. 5128

My name is Win Evarts and I reside in New Canaan with my wife and three children. Our oldest son is 25 years old and has a seizure condition and intellectual and developmental disabilities ("I/DD"). We are one of the many families in Connecticut that are trying to build meaningful lives for our adult family members with a disability.

We thank Committee chairs Senator Gerratana and Representative Ritter for raising H.B. 5128.

We support H.B. 5128 because it will help our son and other Connecticut citizens with I/DD by sustaining the positive changes at DDS being achieved through institutional consolidation and group home conversions by allowing the budget savings to remain in the DDS system and be applied to the system's unmet needs, notably the Waiting Lists for Residential and Day/Vocational Services. If budget savings and lapses are not applied to unmet needs, DDS will remain a poorly performing agency with respect to those it is mandated to serve and the inequity and Waiting Lists will grow.

We also request that the Committee raise the comprehensive "DDS Family's Rights Bill" proposed by Representative Demicco. This bill will increase transparency in communication between DDS and the families and individuals that it serves.

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of all the citizens and taxpayers of Connecticut.

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