



DATE: March 7, 2017

TO: Public Health Committee

FROM: Ben Shaiken, Public Policy Specialist, The Alliance

RE: S.B. 246, AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE-WIDE WAITING LIST FOR RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT FOR PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES and S.B. 244, AN ACT CONCERNING IMPROVING SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.

Good morning Senator Gerratana, Senator Somers, Representative Steinberg, Representative Srinivasan and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is Ben Shaiken, Public Policy Specialist at The Alliance. The Alliance is Connecticut's statewide association of community nonprofits, which serve over 500,000 people each year and employ almost 14% of Connecticut's workforce.

I offer testimony on Senate Bill number 246, AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE-WIDE WAITING LIST FOR RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT FOR PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES and Senate Bill number 244, AN ACT CONCERNING IMPROVING SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.

Community nonprofits offer families many different options for residential supports and are capable of supporting individuals with even the most complicated medical and behavioral needs. They have been supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities for decades and have a track record of supporting people in the least restrictive environment their needs and preferences will allow.

There are thousands of families in Connecticut who are waiting for residential services from the Department of Developmental Services. Many of them have been waiting for years and are unable to access appropriate care and support for their loved ones. With supports tailored to their needs, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities can thrive in their communities, and families who have left the workforce to care for their children can return knowing their loved one is being supported in the most appropriate environment possible.

While Senate Bill 246 does not address finding supports for individuals and families currently waiting, it does direct the Department of Developmental Services to better plan for the future and to be more transparent about how many people are waiting for services.

The Alliance is especially supportive of the provision of this Bill that requires the Department to include a twenty-year projection for people who will need services in the future. An actuarial projection of how

many people will need support in the future will greatly help the Department, the Legislature, families and providers plan for the future. It is a necessary component to creating a system which can adequately serve everyone who is entitled to support in Connecticut.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony and for your attention to this important issue. Please contact me at bshaiken@ctnonprofitalliance.org at any time for more information.