

March 14, 2018

Dear Honorable Members of the Legislative Committee,

My name is Sandra Trionfini and I am an attorney at the Waterbury office of Connecticut Legal Services (CLS). My work, presently, is solely concentrated in providing representation and advocacy services for persons in Connecticut with developmental and intellectual disability.

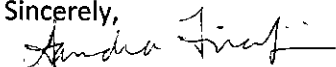
For decades, CLS has provided legal representation and advocacy services for thousands of individuals with developmental and intellectual disability throughout Connecticut. We have consistently advocated for least restrictive options regarding residential and day/work services, enabling our clients to become integral members of their communities, wherever possible. A large part of this advocacy has been to ensure community placement residentially, close to family and friends, allowing full participation in the communities where these individuals reside. As has been demonstrated nationally, people do best when allowed lives in community settings with full inclusion.

CLS opposes Raised Bill No. 463, which establishes a task force to examine alternative resources, including nursing home and rehabilitation center placement, for persons with intellectual disability. Institutional care is not the answer for the present lack of placement opportunities for this population of individuals. It is certainly not the least restrictive option and has been shown, throughout the last decades, to compromise quality of life. Community placement, among peers and family, is truly the best option for individuals with disabilities.

We have come a long way in understanding the needs of the individuals we serve. To back track presently, by re-institutionalizing these individuals, solely because of financial reasons, is a violation of their rights as citizens of Connecticut. Please do not allow financial difficulty to cloud rational decision-making for this vulnerable group of individuals and oppose Raised Bill No. 463.

Thank you for your time and efforts.

Sincerely,



Sandra Trionfini, Attorney at Law

Connecticut Legal Services

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