To the Members of the Appropriations Committee and Our Esteemed Legislature,

My husband, adult children, and I were relieved to learn that Governor Lamont’s budget was mindful of citizens in Connecticut with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD). His support of home and community-based services in particular reflects the Governor’s understanding of the wishes and wellbeing of this most vulnerable community, which includes our severely medically complex, autistic daughter.

All residents of Connecticut are aware of our fiscal crisis, and our family understands that compromise and sacrifice are a necessity to pull ourselves out of debt to transform our state. This will take fiscal scrutiny and many tough decisions, but our savings cannot be a burden born on the backs of an innocent population, which is fully capable of thriving in the correct settings.

It is therefore that much more vital that the budget ultimately passed by the legislation contains no cuts to current services, fully funds employment and day support for new graduates, maintains each aspect of enhanced crisis intervention and behavioral supports, and provides capital for new supportive housing.

To cut costs at the expense of the I/DD community is not simply morally bankrupt, but economically unsound. The Governor in his budget has made room for creative cost-cutting that is more amenable to many people with I/DD and their families. Together with various commissions, agencies, boards, and legislators, we have the ability to create the highest quality, individualized environment for each person in need at the lowest price point. This is not simply an exciting position to find ourselves in, but the right one.

Thank you for hearing our testimony,

Elaine MacKenzie & The MacKenzie Family
Chris, Alyssa, Cayla, Tess, Addison, And Andrew MacKenzie (all of New Canaan, CT)