Testimony for the Appropriations Committee Hearing

March 1, 2019

Dear Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Larry Gray. I live with my wife Joan and our 32 year old daughter Lauren in East Hampton, CT. Lauren has Down syndrome and is currently supported by MARC Community Resources in Middletown.

Lauren currently attends the MARC Employment Opportunities and Day Services program five days a week where she receives a broad range of vocational skills and employment opportunities. She works at Filomena’s Restaurant in Manchester and Greenwald Industries in Chester, CT. She is very happy with this program because it gives her a chance to be out in the community and she feels she has a place in society just as her non-disabled family members and friends.

We are pleased to see that the current proposed budget does not cut current services. It also maintains the funding for day and employment services for people who will be graduating from secondary educational programs. Without these services these individuals would be forced to sit at home with nothing meaningful to do. It may also create a situation that requires a parent or other family to give up employment to stay home with these individuals.

Under the proposed budget funding will also be available for Enhanced Crisis Intervention & Behavioral supports to address critical needs and to transition individuals who would otherwise languish in emergency departments. Families need this funding to maintain a quality of life for their family members.

We also ask your support for the funding of 70 new supportive housing units in FY 2020. This will expand the continuum of residential services for individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorder for support in their own apartments with wraparound services such as in-home supports, case management and rental assistance.

We understand that the state is facing a serious financial crisis but we urge you to support the proposed budget that provides services to one of the most vulnerable segments of our population. These programs are vital to the well-being of these individuals and it is your moral responsibility as representatives of the people of the state of Connecticut to ensure that these opportunities are available.

Larry Gray
124 Laurel Ridge
East Hampton, CT 06424
860-267-2131