Good Afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and Members of the Appropriations Committee. My Name is Amy Dudek and I am a registered voter in Norwich. I am submitting my testimony on H.B. No. 7148, concerning the DSS budget. I am currently advocating for a consumer of mine who I will call Sarah. Sarah came to my local Independent Living Center with her Aunt in need of assistance with housing. She is challenged with an intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorder. Sarah's mother died unexpectedly, leaving her Aunt to look after her and make sure her needs are met. Sarah's Aunt, who I will call Caroline, is very concerned about her future because she is getting older, and wants to know that if anything should happen to her, that Sarah will be taken care of. Currently, Sarah is living with her father and her sister. However, she admits this is a difficult situation because her and her sister have very different personalities, and they argue a lot. Sarah is aware and in agreement with her aunt that she will need to relocate. She has brought her DDS application and I have assisted her with it. We have her goal set in hopes that she would be provided additional necessary services such as case management, family support services, as well as community resources.

Caroline and Sarah are so grateful when they needed assistance that they were able to turn to their Independent Living Center. Together we prepared Sarah's application and submitted it. Sarah has been very faithful about being part of the process. She called own her own, to set up the appointment with her Aunt. In addition, she called to follow up with me. Sarah wanted me to know her application had been received, but the letter read, she was on a five to eight year waiting list. After receiving her call, I couldn't help but wonder what might happen to Sarah in her future? I also wondered, what happens to all the other residents like Sarah? For this reason I urge you to
keep valuable services available to all residents of Connecticut who are in need. Thank you for your help and for your attention to these important services and supports.