

November 11, 2015

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I am writing to you as a (IDENTIFY RELATIONSHIP: PARENT, SIBLING, CAREGIVER, FRIEND, ETC.) of a person with developmental disabilities. I, along with thousands of other family members, am extremely concerned about the future of needed programs and services that are critical to the well-being of people with developmental disabilities.

The field of developmental disabilities is facing enormous challenges. Funding for essential supports and services has eroded during recent years. Our most vital concerns right now include –

- **Direct Support Professionals receiving fair compensation for their undeniably vital work**
Inadequate wages for Direct Support Professional staff members make it extremely difficult for us to recruit and retain these essential workers.
- **Residential and Day opportunities keep pace with the need**
A shortage of residential and day options for adults with disabilities living at home with elderly or infirm parents is most disconcerting and most often results in crisis' situations.
- **Employment options include choice and opportunity to remain in non-competitive work settings**
There exists an absence of employment options for people with developmental disabilities who wish to work in the community or remain in a viable work center.

(TELL YOUR STORY HERE: Pick the one or two issues most critical to you and tell the Governor how it impacts you personally, your family and/or your loved one with a developmental disability, as well as your community.)

As you prepare the state budget for 2016-17, I implore you to consider these issues. YOU have the ability to ensure that my (IDENTIFY RELATIONSHIP) has Direct Support Professionals who are paid a fair living wage as well as access to the opportunities, services, programs and supports (HE/SHE) needs. I speak for everyone who does have the capability to do so

WE ARE DEPENDING ON YOU.

Sincerely,