

From: [Kim Little](#)
To: [Carvalho, Joseph](#)
Cc: [Carol Scully](#)
Subject: DDS 5 year plan testimony
Date: Tuesday, January 11, 2022 9:49:49 AM

EXTERNAL EMAIL: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

My name is Ellyn Little and I am from Tolland. Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the draft five-year plan developed by the Department of Developmental services. While I am pleased to know that the department has identified goals for the agency, it is more important than ever that DDS address the specific real-life needs of the individuals served by the department.

As a self advocate this plan is critical to the future health and wellbeing of myself and others with disabilities. Ensuring that I can live in a supported and inclusive community environment is essential and the programs and services developed by the DDS must reflect this approach.

Our voices provide important feedback and highlight the need for additional resources. No longer do we live in a one-size fits all world. In fact, we can learn from the approach of other states and create new, supported living environments and options. Specifically, this plan should be revised to include: More individualized, supported living options, Resources to support person-centered planning, employment progression and affordable community-based housing options, Increased training for families and Support personnel, Improved medical and behavioral emergency support, and Increased collaboration opportunities with DDS for supported individuals and their families.

I would like to address two of the above areas that have impacted me personally. First of all, employment continues to be a frustration to me. I have been hired in positions that are available to people with disabilities not where I have interests. I held a position for 9 years at a grocery store but was never given an opportunity for advancement. When I started my current job I was working 20-25 hours a week. This was perfect for me. However, I am now working only 8-10 hours because this is the policy of the company once you have been there for a while. I continue to ask for more time but nothing has changed in 5 months. People need to be included in any environment in the community to address choice, one could use Customized Employment.

Secondly, I have been on the waiting list for 13 years. I have been ready to live on my own for 5 years. I have been learning ADL skills with the help of CFC and if I am not living in my own residence in July I will lose my CFC funding. Also because I have a LON of 2 I will never get any residential funding from DDS. I find this to be frustrating because I will need the support in my future residence and will need to work more hours to be able to afford my home. Thinking in creative ways in the area of housing will open doors for more independence and socialization.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I look forward to your feedback, seeing the revised plan and the opportunity to work together in this process.

Ellyn Little
16 Carter Dr
Tolland, CT 06084
860-871-7109