

Good afternoon, my name is Bill Larson and I am currently employed by a Support Service Brokerage. We provide necessary services to people who experience developmental disabilities that allow them to experience the quality of life that you and I are enjoy. I am writing to you to express my concern regarding the health and integrity of a system that I have come to value. Support service providers for people with disabilities like the Brokerage I work within embody the very values we seek within our society. Continuing at or further cutting into the current level of funding threatens to undermine a system that embodies a commitment to equality, self-determination, respect, courage, as well as many other values that are too numerous to list here. I know that balancing the budget is an extremely difficult task however; support services for people experiencing disabilities are already at a tipping point with respect to their level of funding. We already support people who are the most vulnerable of our population with too meager means. The lack of funding manifests itself in many ways. It leads to inadequate wages and high turnover within the field that undermines the very way that services are provided. At some point support service personnel know that they aren't working in a career and move on leaving a talent gap that is often difficult to fill and severing important and trusted relationships with the very people we support. When compensation for support service personnel lags low skilled positions outside support services the system experiences rot from the inside. Unfortunately and out of necessity, cuts are balanced on the backs of the people who can not bear them and the core values we both believe to be so important take a back seat. Please consider this when you make your very difficult budget decisions. I trust that you will do what you believe to be right and at the minimum will not cut further into a system that has already been weakened by cuts over the past several years. Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,  
Bill Larson

*William Larson*