



## Sharing your story: Tips for writing to lawmakers.

Legislators need to hear from you to know who you are and what is important to you and your family. Contacting a legislator on an issue once is not enough. They need to hear from you and others in their district multiple times throughout the session and throughout the year if you want them to make your family's needs a priority. All families should be communicating with their legislators frequently in person and by email, phone and snail mail.

### **SAMPLE INFORMATION TO INCLUDE IN EMAILS/LETTERS TO LEGISLATORS:**

*Name*

*Street Address, Town*

*Issue you are writing about.*

*The name and age of your loved one with I/DD.*

*What funding/supports if any, do you currently have? What do those supports mean to your loved one with I/DD and your family?*

*How would losing those supports impact your family?*

*Are you on a DDS waiting list for supports?*

*How does not having the supports you need impact your family?*

*What are your concerns/fears for the future for your loved one with I/DD?*

*What can legislators do to help your family?*

### **You might also wish to add Arc Connecticut Talking Points:**

- *More than 90% of individuals with I/DD who receive supports, receive those supports in the community from private providers. These programs are all Medicaid programs and they receive federal reimbursement.*
- *There should never be cuts to the following lines in the DDS & DSS budgets because cuts to these lines cause harm to more than 90% of those who receives supports in the community:*

**DDS** - *Employment & Day Services, Respite & Family Support Grants, Behavioral Services Program*

**DSS** - *Community Residential Services, Community First Choice, Autism Services*

- ***There should be no cuts in funding for people with I/DD at all, but if cuts must happen, they should be aimed at overtime, waste and inefficiencies in DDS institutions and other operations. In FY 2016, DDS still spent more than \$45 million on overtime, which is about 18% of its total spending on personal services. We have shown that DDS is overstaffed and that overtime can be reduced by much more.***