

My husband and I are writing you today to ask you to **support SB0636/HB1403**. This bill addresses the long list of individuals waiting for the Developmental Disability Administration's funding.

We live in Allegany County, a very rural area with very limited opportunities for individuals with special needs. My husband's daughter and my stepdaughter, Katie, was born with cognitive development issues, is legally blind, and is considered Developmentally Disabled. **She has been approved in the Crisis Prevention status for full DDA funding since 2018 but there is no money to fund her.** I attached her approval letter for your review.

Katie is very passionate about her work. Growing up, she enjoyed socializing and being a part of the community - even winning a gold medal at the State Special Olympics and competing in Alaska at the national level. Katie went through the Special Education Program in the public school system. When she was in the transition program, she moved out of State with her mother and didn't know she had to sign back up to keep her benefits.

Katie is now 37 years old, lives with us, and works 6 hours a week. She has no funding to attend any programs for individuals with Developmental Disabilities. Katie has limited interaction with her peers, no social outlet, very little to look forward to, and suffers from depression and anxiety. Over the past 4 years, her mom has passed away, her grandfather passed away, she has had to move out of her home she shared with her mom, and she is an extremely sad person. Without this funding, there is no real opportunity for Katie's situation to improve. The quality of her life is very limited. We both work full time, and she spends most of her time at home alone. This area offers no programs for her to participate in without Development Disability Administration funding.

This bill could **change her life** by giving her:

- Transportation to events.
- Funding to attend a day program that offers social events and interaction with her peers.
- Funding for job training and support.
- Independent living opportunities, for which she longs.
- A enriched quality of life.
- A chance to experience independence.

I would be happy to talk to you further about this bill and the lives it could change. We would love for you to meet Katie either in person or in a virtual meeting and hear more from her about how these programs would change her life. Please call us at your earliest convenience or email us.

Please support this bill!

Respectfully
Shelley Miller
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