

Dear Members of The Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs and The House Committee on General and Housing:

We are the parents and guardians to our 25 year old son with developmental disabilities, who lives with us and receives adult services through Home and Community Based Services (HCBS). Our son has often been described medically as “complex” given his multiple diagnoses and needs, but he is an amazing individual who desires an opportunity to live with peers in a safe community with the appropriate supports for him to be successful and not live with his parents. I am writing to advocate for choices in stable, service-supported affordable housing options for all adults with significant developmental disabilities that receive HCBS, because the Shared Living Provider Model (SLP) is appropriate for only a small portion of this population and lacks the permanence, stability and security our son needs.

As members of the Developmental Disabilities Housing Initiative (DDHI), we are writing to request that the state of Vermont prioritize the development of stable, service-supported housing options across the state to better serve Vermonters with developmental disabilities that meets their varying range of support needs. Our son desires housing options and choice to live in the community in which he grew up and where many of his peers reside. This is not an option for him today and we urge you to take action to help the most needy and vulnerable of Vermonters. Please support the development of stable, service-supported housing within the funding for affordable housing in our communities.

Thank you.

-Jenn & Ed Townley on behalf of Bennett (Williston)