



## Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council

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TO: House Appropriations Services Committee (Rep. Heath, *Chair*; Rep. Johnson, *Vice Chair*; Rep. Helm, *Ranking Member*; Rep. Fagan; Rep. Keenan; Rep. Manwaring; Rep. Miller; Rep. O'Brien; Rep. Pearce; Rep. Toll, *Clerk*; and Rep. Winters.)

FROM: Karen Schwartz, Executive Director

RE: SFY2015 Department of Disabilities, Aging & Independent Living Budget

DATE: February 18, 2014

Thank you for this opportunity to speak about the FY2015 budget request made by the Agency of Human Services and Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living [DAIL].

VTDDC is vitally interested because we are mandated by federal law to act as an independent advocate and bring the voices of people with developmental disabilities and their families to the policymaking table.

We very much support the FY2015 budget for including new caseload funds to meet the needs of Vermonters.

There are a couple of unanswered questions about the budget request that we hope you will explore:

1. Was the budget request based on a consensus estimate that followed methodology recommendations in the September Report to the Joint Fiscal Committee? Act 50 Section E.333 provided that projections be based on a consensus estimate by DAIL, the Department of Finance & Management and the Joint Fiscal Office, to be presented to the Emergency Board at its January 2014 meeting, which did not happen.
2. Does the budget include any new caseload dollars to meet waiting lists for any of the basic services for people who do not meet current funding priorities? Since 2009 waiting lists have jumped from 36 to 167 for people who need
  - √ Flexible Family Funding – provides up to \$1000 per family to use for respite and other needs
  - √ Targeted Case Management – provides up to several hours a month to check-in and help people stay out of crisis.
  - √ Bridge Program – provides limited case management services for families of children with intellectual disabilities.

On behalf of individuals and families I would like to express appreciation for the support you have shown through tough times.

Thank you for your consideration.

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