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Disability Rights Groups Call for Repeal of 'Tax' on Low-Income Families with Children

Good morning. My name is Nicole LeBlanc from Green Mountain Self-Advocates. I want to thank you for coming to this press conference.

After the Governor's budget forums, the headlines read, same story, different year. I guess if you are taking a bird's eye view of the budget, I can see how all these cuts look the same. But for the hundreds of mothers with disabilities and their children this is a new financial strain on their household.

For some, suddenly losing \$125 a month may be just a drop in the bucket but for mothers with disabilities barely able to provide for the basic needs of their children losing \$125 a month is like a major tax hike.

In one way it is the same story because once again we have balanced our state budget on the backs of those who are least able to pay. Vermont must confront its fiscal challenges in an equitable manner. The gap between people with excessive wealth and poverty continues to grow.

This disability tax is yet another example of inequity being at an all-time high. Our budget needs to make sure all Vermonters get what they need and give what they can.

Let's find a different path. Let's write a different headline this year. We can start by eliminating the \$125 disability tax for mothers with disabilities and their children.

Thank you