

From: Diana Wahle [dianawahle@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 15, 2018 4:34 PM
To: Theresa Utton
CC: julie cunningham; Connie
Subject: Concern about budget cut for Developmental Services

Dear Theresa Utton and the Senate Appropriations Committee:

I am writing against the proposed \$4.3 million budget cut in Developmental Services.

My name is Diana Wahle, from East Dummerston. I have a 38-year old neighbor who has a developmental disability. He is supported by the Specialized Service Agency, Families First. I have known him for his entire life. I know he had difficulty getting the education he deserved in our local public schools. As an adult he has a full productive life because of the individualized programming and support of Families First. It's wonderful that he has been employed for 17 years. He is involved in community activities. His life without support services would be lonely and unproductive. Previous budget cuts (\$14.1 million over the past 9 years) have however cut back on his staff support. The governor's proposed budget has a \$4.3 million reduction in the budget for Developmental Services. This would have a devastating effect on Nathan and Families First. I know that Vermont's program is seen as a model for other states. Why is Vermont destroying a program which has been successfully supporting our most vulnerable population? Isn't that enough reason to continue its support?

Developmental services in Vermont are already known for being cost effective. Do not cut any more funding out of the developmental services budget.

Thank you, Diana Wahle

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