

## Rebecca Buck

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**From:** Jane Kitchel <janek45@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 21, 2018 6:56 AM  
**To:** Rebecca Buck  
**Subject:** Fw: Letter to Appropriations Committees  
**Attachments:** prior DS Budget cuts.pdf; To Appropriations Committees.pdf

**Importance:** High

Please make copies for the committee.

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**From:** Hutt, Monica <[Monica.Hutt@vermont.gov](mailto:Monica.Hutt@vermont.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 20, 2018 1:00 PM  
**To:** [jkitchel@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:jkitchel@leg.state.vt.us); Jane Kitchel; Catherine Toll; Diane Lanpher; [rawestman@gmail.com](mailto:rawestman@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** FW: Letter to Appropriations Committees

Senators Kitchel and Westman and Representatives Toll and Lanpher, I wanted to let you know, in advance, that you would be receiving this letter from our Developmental Services Standing Committee. They are a committee required by our system of care and appointed by the Governor and represent individuals, families, advocates and providers. They felt very strongly that they wanted to voice their independent concerns about the proposed reductions in developmental services.

Thanks, Monica

**Monica Caserta Hutt, Commissioner**  
**Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living**  
**Commissioner's Office**  
**HC 2 South**  
**280 State Drive**  
**Waterbury, VT 05671-2020**  
**Telephone:** 802.241.2401  
**E-mail:** [monica.hutt@vermont.gov](mailto:monica.hutt@vermont.gov)  
<http://www.dail.vermont.gov/>

*The mission of the Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living is to make Vermont the best state in which to grow old or to live with a disability - with dignity, respect and independence.*

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## RE: Past budget cuts

Bill Ashe &lt;billa@uvs-vt.org&gt;

Mon 1/29/2018 10:01 AM

To: Cleveland Vitzthum, Lynne &lt;Lynne@vermontcarepartners.org&gt;;

Here is the summary that totaled 14 million. This needs to be updated through FY 18 to be accurate.

Bill

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DS COLA Increases FY2009 through FY2014

|               |                    |                                                                      |
|---------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>FY2014</u> | <b>\$1,449,401</b> | COLA Directed by Legislature for<br>Compensation - Staff/Contractors |
|---------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|

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DS Budget Reductions FY2009 through FY2014

|               |                     |                                         |
|---------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <u>FY2009</u> | \$1,632,399         | 1 <sup>st</sup> Rescission              |
|               | <u>\$ 3,360,822</u> | <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Rescission</u>        |
|               | \$4,993,221         | Total                                   |
| <u>FY2010</u> | \$250,000           | Reduce FFF Max. from \$1,300 to \$1,000 |
| <u>FY2011</u> | \$160,000           | Eliminate DS State Respite Homes        |
|               | \$1,499,225         | Challenges for Change 1% cut            |
|               | <u>\$797,862</u>    | <u>Reduction to Equity Fund</u>         |
|               | \$2,457,087         | Total                                   |
| <u>FY2012</u> | \$3,847,179         | Budget cut to fund New Caseload         |
| <u>FY2013</u> | \$350,000           | Reduced Reimbursement – hospitalization |
| <u>FY2014</u> | \$2,230,000         | Budget cut to fund New Caseload         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>\$14,127,487</b> |                                         |

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**From:** Cleveland Vitzthum, Lynne [mailto:Lynne@vermontcarepartners.org]

**Sent:** Monday, January 29, 2018 9:11 AM

**Developmental Services  
State Program Standing Committee  
Linda Berger and Bethany Drum, Co-Chairs  
February 16, 2018**

Vermont Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Vermont House Committee on Appropriations  
115 Main Street  
Montpelier, Vermont 05633

Dear Committee Members,

The Developmental Disabilities Services State Program Standing Committee is a Governor appointed body, charged with making recommendations regarding the implementation of the system of care plan for services to people with developmental disabilities and their families. We oppose the Governor's proposed 2% reduction to current DS HCBS Waivers, of \$4,328.067. This cut will put vulnerable citizens in jeopardy. While this reduction is to include impact on administration, it is our understanding from Commissioner Hutt that this reduction will actually come from respite, employment, and community support services, which are direct services to recipients. The cut will have a larger impact on people living with their families or on their own because these are the very services that match DAIL's mission of allowing them to live "with dignity, respect, and independence." Since the closing of Brandon Training School, Vermont has become a national model for a cost-effective system that supports people with disabilities to live in work in their communities.

Over the past 9 years there have been over \$14.1 million in cuts to Developmental Disability Services; see attached. Because of these cuts the Designated Agencies and the Developmental Disabilities Services Division have no more places to cut that won't directly impact recipients. We have had yearly increases in our new caseload funding, but that funding is exclusively for the needs of new people coming into the system. To use a hospital metaphor, if a hospital was asked to increase 100 beds per year, and have a reduction in the funded amount of the overall operating costs, there would have to be a commensurate decrease in hospital services.

The cuts over the past 9 years negatively impacted agency ability to offer competitive wages, thereby causing high staff turnover and shortages for permanent and substitute staff. A state-wide increase in direct care staff wages to \$14/hour was approved last year. How can agencies receive reduced funding, fund this increase in salaries, and maintain services? Technical assistance and monitoring from DAIL has already been cut. It is clear to us that the proposed cut will cause other, more costly crises: more use of crisis beds, home providers terminating, higher staff turnover, and decrease in quality of life for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Finally, we would like to share the words of three people who receive services from Developmental Services:

**“I get services to help me have a job. I love my job because it not only gives me money, but it puts me in the community. People see what I have to offer. I feel like I am accomplishing something.”**

**“I need services to live on my own. Staff help me with cooking, paying my bills, and shopping. They take me to the doctor’s appointments and give me emotional support.”**

**“Let me give you an example of why Developmental Services are important. Roughly 40% of Vermonters with developmental disabilities have jobs and pay taxes. This is one of the highest rates of employment in the country. People see what we have to offer. It builds confidence to live more independently. When Developmental Services support people to work, it is a great investment because the more people work the less they rely on social security benefits. This is a win-win situation. The key is getting the accommodations we need to work and the support to work from trained job coaches. Vermont is leading the nation because the provider agencies excel at hiring and training a workforce that finds people with developmental disabilities jobs and supports them to stay employed.”**

**Thank you for considering this information in you budget deliberations.**