



**House Health Care Committee
Gail Zatz
June 3, 2020**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today before your committee regarding the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF). All Adult Day programs remain closed since mid-March, and the Barre program has closed permanently.

There 14 Adult Day programs throughout Vermont, which provide community-based non-residential supports to adults with physical or cognitive impairments. Our services include nursing care (many of our participants have high medical needs), meals, and socialization. We not only enable our participants to remain in their homes and active in their communities, but we also provide essential respite, support, and education to family members and caregivers.

Many programs have received short-term (through June) Medicaid Retainers and/or CARES Act loans. However, come July 1st, for the most part, those funds will no longer be available. We are fee-for-services providers and, because we are closed, we will not be able to cover fixed costs (i.e., rent/mortgage, maintenance costs, etc.) and payroll. There is an imperative need for funding so that we can remain viable until such time as it is safe and feasible to reopen.

Without support from CRF, we will most certainly all close - permanently. Closure of our programs will result in

- Increased nursing homes admissions, resulting in high costs to the state, not to mention decreased quality of life for the participant.
- Increased family caregiver responsibilities (for those who can remain at home), resulting in loss of time for caregiver employment and high stress levels (no respite)
- Increased elder abuse and exploitation related in increased caregiver stress
- Increased social isolation of the participant, which has nationally been shown to contribute to increased health problems and premature morbidity
- Increased utilization of physicians' offices and hospital emergency rooms in place of the consistent health oversight and chronic health management available at an Adult Day Program

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with you in the coming days.