

**Linda Wichlac**  
**President, Vermont Association of Adult Day Services**  
**Testimony FY 2021 Budget**  
**August 21, 2020**

My name is Linda Wichlac. I am the Executive Director of Bennington Project Independence Adult Day Service. I am also the President of the Vermont Association of Adult Services.

**Coronavirus Relief Funds**

The members of the Vermont Association of the Adult Day Services and myself would like to thank you very much for your support of Adult Day programs in the first quarter budget. The CRF appropriation we received in July was critical in helping our programs remain viable during this pandemic and assisted us with our preparation so that we may be able to reopen when it is safe to do so. We remain closed for in-person services at this time, but are working on providing a new model of adult day service without walls, such as on-line and telephonic support and services for our participants and their families.

We are asking that the FY 2021 budget include the same CRF appropriation as in the first quarter budget - \$2.45 million to support Adult Day programs through December.

**Appropriations beyond December**

Beyond December, whether we are able to open or not for in-person services, we will continue to need state financial support to help us remain viable. Even when we do reopen, we will not immediately be at 100% capacity and we are anticipating needing assistance through the remainder of the fiscal year.

While we appreciate that the Governor's recommended budget level funds Medicaid reimbursement rates and doesn't cut them, our reimbursement rate, as most of you are aware, is only \$16.72/hour for the comprehensive services we provide. Whether we are operating at 100% or 50% capacity, we are not going to be able to continue to provide these comprehensive services at that rate. Our fixed costs exceed that reimbursement level and impact our ability to attract and maintain qualified personnel.

**We are asking for:**

1. \$2.45 million CRF appropriation to support Adult Day programs through December 2020
2. Continued support of Adult Day programs from January through June of 2021

Thank you for this opportunity and your consideration.