

To the members of Appropriations,

My name is Laurie Mumley. I live in Shelburne, and am an aging single parent to two children. I retired 6 years ago. I had planned to resume working but am unable to do so due to the needs of my son. My daughter is a college freshman, currently out of state. My son Joey is 23. He loves music, singing, Disney movies, the Rocky Horror Picture Show, swimming, and being a part of things. He is very social, and enjoys spending time with his peers. He can be absolutely charming, funny, has an infectious laugh, a beautiful singing voice, and a fantastic sense of humor.

Joey was diagnosed with autism at age 2 1/2. He continues to struggle with compulsive behaviors, multiple sensory challenges, a complete lack of safety awareness, and numerous behavioral challenges (heightened by the fact that he is 6'3" and over 400 pounds). He is also minimally verbal and requires assistance with all activities of daily living. He requires 24/7 supervision and needs a high level of structure and predictability.

Vermont relies almost exclusively on the Shared Living Model (adult foster care) which can work for some, particularly people with lower support needs and higher verbal skills. It is not appropriate for my son, nor would it be safe for him. Finally, it is NOT a permanent solution for housing as people with disabilities can be displaced once the provider decides to change jobs, move, etc.

Joey's needs can be overwhelming. In early January, for instance, I suffered a medical event requiring emergency surgery. I would NOT have gone to the hospital at all if my daughter had not been home from college (to stay with her brother). Obviously, this would have increased the likelihood of a bad health outcome. I know of other aging parents who have faced similar dilemmas. Despite my need to live long enough to successfully transition my son into appropriate, stable, service supported housing, I fear that I will not live long enough for that to happen. I am also unable to fully assist my own parents with their significant health needs (including hospice care).

I'm part of the Developmental Disabilities Housing Initiative (DDHI), an all-volunteer group of over 175 Vermont parents of adults with Developmental Disabilities, who receive the Home and Community Based Waiver (HCBS) and have moderate to high support needs. We formed a few years ago to advocate for housing choices for our adult children. We've researched housing models, conducted housing surveys, and advocated for systemic changes to remove barriers to developing appropriate housing for this population. Act 69 was passed during the last session, and culminated in a report entitled The Road Home. This report recommends the following, and I am asking that the budget support these needs:

1. **New permanent position at DAIL** – Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living – to support housing development and housing process for

- participants in HCBS services (DS,CFC,BI). Position is included in S. 328 Senate Housing Committee bill, and recommended by the Act 69 Road Home Report;
2. **New funding for Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to develop I/DD service supported housing** – there is no money in the Governor’s recommended budget specifically for I/DD housing. **The Senate Housing Bill includes \$3 Million** – the Road Home Report recommends \$5-10 million per year for 5 years;
  3. **New funding for Bridge Rental Assistance** – State funded rental assistance (Section 8 vouchers)for participants in DAIL’s HCBS programs- The Road Home report recommends \$1-2 million dollars per year.The Bridge Rental Assistance Program that would include DAIL/HCBS is in bill H. 494.
  4. If #3 is not funded, there is an **immediate need for 25-30 state funded rental assistance vouchers to support the tenants in the Service Supported housing** the legislature has invested in – e.g. the DDHI pilot projects in Waterbury and Burlington, and new I/DD projects in the VHCB pipeline-WWJ. \$400,000.00 dollars estimated annual investment.

Please invest in this long-ignored population. Thank you,

Laurie Mumley  
802-310-4464 cell  
Shelburne, VT 06582