

My name is Marla McQuiston, I'm here to ask for the funding needed for the three pilot projects which were planned from Act 186. Two of the projects are on their way- the Champlain Housing Trust project in Burlington still needs \$2.8 M to move ahead. We are hoping to receive that this year.

I am part of the Developmental Disabilities Housing Initiative. I have 3 sons and a daughter. My youngest son has Down syndrome. He's 27 and we're hoping to make sure that he'll have a place to live once we are gone. He has friends and is well known in Williston, and would be happiest if he could stay there and live with some peers.

He will always need Direct Support Professionals to help him with cooking, keeping on a schedule and all money management. **He doesn't want to live in a different town** where he doesn't know people, which is what happens with people who are placed with Shared Living Providers.

We want him to have a stable place to live and be involved in his community. Like everyone else, he needs a place he can call home.

Housing for IDD needs to be a priority now

In 1993 when Brandon institution closed, the state promised to support people with IDD in their communities, but very little has been done in 30 years.

The state has relied almost exclusively on Shared Living Providers, or adult foster care for those with highest needs.

5 agencies recently surveyed Shared Living Providers and found 25% are planning to leave in the next 5 years. Because of the staffing crisis, the state is now relying on aging parents for housing. Many of the parents in our group have left work to care for their young adults. There is an immediate need for 602 units. This number is from the DDC housing brief done in 2023.

<https://ddc.vermont.gov/news/housing-report>

IDD housing is different

The CHT Burlington project and all of the DDHI work is aimed at individuals with moderate to high support needs.

These are not people who can live on their own with periodic checkins. They have a range of needs, some are nonverbal and need diapering, some are able to work 15 hrs week, but can't drive, manage their schedule to get to work, and can't manage their money.

ADA standards are not enough

The cost of creating IDD housing is high. Some people need a lift system to use the bathroom, toilet and shower, which means room in the bathroom for 2 people to assist. They need food prepared for them and be able to eat together in a large kitchen. Others can live in a typical apartment. **These extra spaces cost more than a typical affordable housing unit.**

We need funding, Even if we are able to include apartments in large affordable projects, they will need extra space. **We expect that as these projects are built we will see efficiencies within the design and operation**, but we need to start now. We can't wait,

you can't evaluate results to create efficiencies until you have the records from actual practice.

Michael Monte, CHT, said in August - Regulatory relief will have some impact. ... we asked for investment and resources and we didn't get what we needed and we still need it.

We understand that there is a huge need for housing for many marginalized people, and that people who are homeless are dying because of lack of housing.

We can share stories of death and awful abuse of individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities who were placed in housing with inadequate care providers.

Many of those with severe DD are not out on the streets because they would not survive 24 hrs, so they are housed - **inappropriately** - 23 yrs olds in a nursing home, some with high medical needs in the hospital emergency department for weeks, or some in the motel programs.

All of These people need permanent housing.

Vermont has Shared Living Providers, which don't work as well for those with highest support needs. Would you want to have your elderly parent with dementia and mobility issues placed in a strangers home? We need to provide housing for Vermonters with IDD who want to live permanently and be involved in their communities.