

Committee Members
House Committee on Human Services
State of Vermont

March 25, 2025

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing in three capacities: as a parent of a developmentally disabled 38-year-old son, as President of the Board of Directors of Upper Valley Services, and as a Vermont humanist. In the first capacity I am very concerned about the future of services for my son. He's an odd mixture of a joyful soul who is riddled by anxiety and fear. He loves to laugh and help other people, but he struggles severely to keep "Mr. Worry" at bay. We have no idea what impacts are in front of him from payment reform since he only just today (3/25/2025) completed his SIS and it has yet to be scored.

As a UVS board member, I am deeply concerned for the hundreds of individuals that UVS serves, their staff and providers, and their families. Those potentially impacted numbers in the thousands. And I am concerned about the financial viability of UVS should this payment reform process be pushed through without safety nets in place to catch the fallout. I understand the UVS budget intimately, and I know how close we walk to the line each month to provide the services that we can.

Lastly, I am committed to this State and to the full community that enfolds our developmentally disabled citizens. The number of people State-wide who are at risk of serious detrimental impact is hard to picture, but UVS is one of the smallest of more than twenty such agencies, so the number is easily in the tens of thousands.

Since coming to Vermont in 1982 and adopting two children in 1987, the State has rescued both, repeatedly, and the depth of our gratitude is immeasurable. Over our years here my wife and I have purchased five properties, four of which are now occupied by developmentally disabled clients and/or their staff. We wish we could do more, and we will, but right now we need you to hold the system together while we all work to fix it. Thank you.



David S. Westerman: Parent, UVS Board President, Vermonter/Humanist
Moretown, Vermont