

I want to give you a piece of life in the south part of Vermont. I am the guardian and parent of a young man with multiple neurodivergent needs who has worked very hard all his life to be independent and hoping to have a place to call home of his own, not a bedroom in someone else's home but his own. This has not happened as rents are out of sight and reach for those with neurodivergent needs. The lack of places that offer supported living are not available in southern Vermont. It is time to change that. There are many development opportunities in the southern part of the state but the need for financing and developers are seriously lacking. This needs to change. Time is now to establish financing opportunities for our neurodivergent population. We here in Southwestern Vermont don't have day programming without going a half hour south to Bennington. I'm sorry but My son grew up in Manchester, has friends and support staff in Manchester, NOT IN BENNINGTON! Services and housing should be available to you in the town where you reside not 30-40 minutes away from your primary caregiver. These folks are vulnerable and need to be able to have a place of their own, where they can live and still have supports. Programming can be made available in Manchester but the lack of services coordination and funds has made it difficult. Caregivers have to provide every detail of being adults to our young adults. It's time for the state to realize that there is a crisis for many living here. Bennington county and even the southern part of Rutland county have virtually nothing that isn't done and provided by us caregivers. We are not a part of Massachusetts but Vermont. Let's funnel some funding to the south and bring us into the 21st century.