



*For people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities*

July 18, 2017

Speaker Robert DeLeo
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Mr. Speaker:

The Arc appreciates the efforts made to address the formula for Turning 22 and unmet needs for Fiscal Year 2018. This assistance will help individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including autism, through an enormous life transition. With appropriate funding individuals will not be sitting at home, parents won't have to leave jobs to care for them and programs will exist that will provide meaningful experiences and support.

Unfortunately, the gap in revenue forced the legislature to reduce allocations to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and MassHealth (among other line items). These reductions will be difficult. But the Governor's vetoes worsen the impact in both DDS and MassHealth, for our constituents. Although we can't speak to the entire MassHealth cut, we do know that it is an essential resource for health care and long term supports for all people with disabilities. The DDS residential cut (DDS 5920-2000) is the harshest of the vetoes approaching \$7 Million. It freezes planning for those turning 22 who need housing and those with unmet needs who are older. In addition the Transportation (DDS 5911-2000), State Operated Homes (DDS 5920-2010) and Community Day/Work (DDS 5920-2025) were struck.

Given that the legislature addressed the shortfall in its budget, we are hopeful that veto overrides will take place in all the DDS budget reductions over the summer along with MassHealth.

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Achieve with us.

Tracy Atkinson
President

Leo V. Sarkissian
Executive Director

The Arc in Massachusetts Includes the Following Local Chapters:

Berkshire County • Bristol County • Brockton Area • Cape Cod • Center of Hope Foundation
Charles River Center • EMarc • Greater Haverhill-Newburyport • Greater Lawrence • LifeLinks • Greater Plymouth • Greater
Waltham • Minute Man AHS • Northeast • The Arc of Opportunity (North Central) • South Norfolk County • South Shore • The
United Arc

In closing, we owe you a debt of gratitude for your continued support and consistent leadership shown to our community. We are most encouraged by your willingness to support and care for the most vulnerable in our community. Your public service and dedication is much appreciated by The Arc.

Fond regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leo V. Sarkissian".

Leo Sarkissian
Executive Director

cc: Representative Ronald Mariano
Representative Patricia Haddad
Representative Jeffrey Sanchez
Maura Sullivan, The Arc
Charlie Fiske, The Arc

P. S. We look forward to meeting in the fall. We are concerned especially about the shortfalls that will exist in 2018 in DDS Community Residential, State Operated and Day/Work accounts as well as the MassHealth AFC program.