



*For people with intellectual  
and developmental disabilities*

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***Achieve with us.***

Scott Borchardt  
President

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Executive Director

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Yesterday, the Senate Ways & Means Committee released its FY'22 budget. The proposed budget reflects the legislature's efforts to alleviate the challenges and difficulties the Commonwealth, and particularly the disability community, has faced this past year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It also puts forth a thoughtful plan on how we move forward in an equitable way. The Committee's budget invests over \$2.39 billion in a variety of services and programs that assist people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and autism. We're pleased to see the Senate maintain the House FY'22 budget increases in the DDS line items, including Day and Employment (\$15 million increase), Transportation (\$7 million increase) and Family Support (\$7 million increase), with a total increase of \$29 million.

We are appreciative of the Senate's efforts to address workforce challenges and focus resources on an array of safety net services. In addition to a significant investment into mental health resources for families, it is worth noting the investment of nearly \$500K to support quality assurance improvements at the Department of Children and Families as recommended by the Office of the Child Advocate in its review of the David Almond tragedy. (*Please see [Leo's letter on the Tragedy in Fall River.](#)*)

The proposed budget also maintains or increases DDS line items and secures other budget items that benefit our community including but not limited to the following: (**See our [budget chart](#) for more details**):

- \$220M for the DDS Community Day and Work program providing employment support, education and training.
- \$84.9M for DDS to support respite and family services.
- \$79.9M to fully fund Turning 22 services to help young people with disabilities transition to adulthood.
- \$36.6M for specialized services for adults with autism.
- \$27.1M for DDS Transportation services to ensure individuals can access services during recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- \$7.9M for the Disabled Persons Protection Commission, including funding for the caregiver abuse registry mandated by Nicky's Law.
- \$387.9 million for Inclusive educational opportunities for children with disabilities by funding the Special Education Circuit Breaker.
- \$2M for grants offered through the Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative to support high school students with intellectual disabilities ages 18–22 with access to higher education opportunities.
- \$1 million to enhance employment opportunities for young adults with disabilities.
- \$500,000 for supportive technology and remote services for individuals.

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The Arc in Massachusetts Includes the Following Local Chapters:

*Berkshire County • Bristol County • Brockton Area • CCI/LowerCape • Center of Hope Foundation • Charles River Center  
Communitas, Inc. • Greater Haverhill-Newburyport • incompass • Minute Man AHS • Northeast • Opportunities for Inclusion  
The Arc of Opportunity • Plymouth/UpperCape • South Norfolk County • South Shore • The United Arc*

Thank you to Ways & Means Chair Michael Rodrigues and Vice-Chair Cindy Friedman and the entire Committee for listening and responding to our budget requests! We are grateful of your support of the disability community as we continue to face the challenges of COVID-19 and in the words of Chair Rodrigues, "As we work to emerge from this pandemic stronger and more resilient, we continue our work to ensure an equitable recovery and build a more inclusive Commonwealth." We are also appreciative of the continued commitment by Senate President Karen Spilka and the entire Senate leadership to enhance and support the lives of the individuals with I/DD, including autism.

In addition to supporting the proposed FY'22 budget, The Arc is advocating to the Commonwealth on how best to utilize the American Rescue Plan Act funding to address the workforce shortage in the wake of the pandemic and secure HCBS integration in communities across the Commonwealth. Please see our HCBS factsheet [here](#).