

Testimony to fund the request from InterACC/DD for the DD Supplement
Susan Hartung

Good Evening,

Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you. My name is Susan Hartung, I am the mother of Warren and Emily who are developmentally disabled. In the last 32 years, they have had 15 hospitalizations and 10 surgeries in six area hospitals – and this does not include Emergency Room visits.

The reason this is important, is that none of these medical emergencies have occurred in the last year during the COVID pandemic. Considering individuals with IDD are three times more likely to die from COVID it is amazing that both my children have made it through this crisis unscathed.

And that is due to the extraordinary care they have received from the agency that provides them with round the clock care, Community Support Services.

I ask that you add the supplemental funding needed to fully fund the request from InterACC/DD which includes funding for new individuals in need of services. There are those that will speak to you about the mind numbing numbers this pandemic has cost the service providers, but there are a few numbers I want to share with you.

The individuals who provide direct support to my children – feed them, bath them, clothe them, make sure they get their daily 40 medications, work long, difficult hours and for the last year this has meant following stringent protocols, and trying to explain to their clients why they can't go out in public and do the things they love. So, the first number I share with you is that there is a 36% turnover in the Direct Support Service Workforce in the state of Maryland. Imagine how hard this is on the providers and the clients.

The second number I think you should be aware of is that in Montgomery County there are 859 individuals with IDD that receive no services, they are waitlisted.

For the last two decades the number of students transitioning from special education to adult services stayed close to 125 each year. Now I share with you my last number, this year it jumped to 150 and in June of 2022 it is projected that number will be 167, a 30% increase, not including any emergency placements.

For over 35 years I have been a mom, advocate, teacher and business owner. I've learned many things – how expensive it is to do business in Montgomery County, how desperate the need is for quality services for the developmentally disabled, and mostly how nobody does it better than our County. While the majority of funds needed for these services are

provided by the state, it is the county supplement that enables these services to be of high quality and continue to expand as our population grows.

The Council has always done what is right by this population and I ask now, when it is more important than ever, to do it once again.