



January 8, 2024

Representative Wayne MacDonald, Chair

House Health, Human Services, and Elderly Affairs Committee

RE: HB1593-FN – relative to funding for developmental services community integration.

Dear Representative MacDonald and Members of the Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee,

My name is Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre, and I am the Executive Director of the New Hampshire Council on Developmental Disabilities (NHCDD). I am providing testimony on behalf of the NHCDD regarding HB1593. We believe that this would have a positive impact on the lived experience of Granite Staters with developmental disabilities. The NHCDD membership supports the allocation of resources for community integration services as an integral part of the inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in NH.

Access to the community is an important part of inclusion and integration for people with disabilities. Recent Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) guidance has created additional barriers for people with developmental disabilities to access community integration services because of how the federal funding works. As part of NH RSA, under Section 171-A:13, the State offers the following guarantees: “Every developmentally disabled client has a right to adequate and humane habilitation and treatment including such psychological, medical, vocational, social, educational or rehabilitative services as his condition requires to bring about an improvement in condition within the limits of modern knowledge.”

The NHCDD also contributed to a recent letter from the Developmental Services Quality Council to the Commissioner of the NH Department of Health and Human Services which identified the issues and made recommendations for solutions, including the allocation of state funding for Community Integration Services. Without this support NH residents with developmental disabilities will continue to face greater isolation from the community and society at large.

The NHCDD is a federally funded state agency that is dedicated to the pursuit of dignity and justice, authentic community inclusion, cultural competency, and self-determination for all New Hampshire residents with developmental disabilities. It carries out its mission through education, advocacy, and collaboration on initiatives that encourage full integration and inclusion of individuals with developmental disabilities as required in the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act). The DD Act dictates that our Council must be comprised of at least 60% community members with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (ID/DD) and parents or guardians of people with ID/DD. This ensures that our work is led by individuals and families most impacted by our projects and activities. We thank our legislators for their service to our community and for taking our testimony into consideration.

Sincerely Yours,

Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre, MSW,

Executive Director