

Honorable Senators and committee members, I stand before you today requesting that you restore and preserve the principles of DDA's Self Directions Program, establish a State Advisory Council on Self Directed Services and support the end user of these services, which is the Plan Participant and their supportive family members. In addition I ask that you place a moratorium on DDA's scheduled implementation of planned waiver programs. Having spent 3 yrs. as a volunteer member of DDA's "Quality Advisory Council" I want to assure all members present today that I experienced little opportunity to share my experiences and ideas as a parent of a son in the Self Directed Services program, or to offer my free professional input derived from decades of advising businesses on how to improve their operations, be more transparent to their investors and operate with accountability. Instead, DDA used these meetings to promote their own already developed programs, as they continued to stumble in operational efficiency and lacking financial accountability. Director Simons and his department is trying to rush through their program of what they think is best for we the people. I wish to close by asking of DDA & committee members present today the following questions:

1. While denying paid over-night staffing, how do you expect to provide needed staffing without loading more responsibility and stress onto families when shortages already exist for quality staffing?
2. Why is DDA forcing and creating a legal challenge by denying integration and inclusion to the special needs/disability community by developing financial hurdles that limit or restrict our community's access to the Internet and social media when it is guaranteed under the Disabilities Act & the Supreme Court's Ruling in the Olmstead Case? Director Simons, those with special needs have already felt the pain of repeated rejection, why do you refuse to promote this tool that is used by many, if not most in today's world of technology?