

February 28, 2024

Dear Senators,

I'm writing to ask that you **leave intact all provisions of The Self-Direction Act of 2022**. Instead of making changes to this Act through SB0362, I ask that the Senate **institute a workgroup** to study the utilization of funds in the DDA's self-direction model as compared to the provider-manager/traditional model. These two models are very different and must be understood as such.

My adult son with autism, Nicholas, relies on Self-Directed Services. Because of them, he's able to live in an apartment with supports. Because of them, he's able to participate in a work program at Wheaton Regional Stables. Without them, he would have to live at his parent's home or in a group home. As a 29-year-old guy, this isn't what he wants. As a 60-something parent, this isn't what I want (or would be able to sustain) either.

To offer more detail, if Self-Directed Services were to be changed by SB0362, Nick would no longer be able to pay someone to administrate his support services on a day-to-day basis (which he's clearly unable to do on his own). Without this day-to-day administration, it would be impossible to hire, train, schedule, and coordinate his staff, work out his calendar of activities, arrange transportation, make appointments, sign up for programs, schedule his chores, etc. It would also not be possible for him to participate in a number of activities, including his Wheaton Regional Stables work program, that he loves and give his life purpose and meaning.

Nick is a guy who enthusiastically participates in Special Olympics, ArtStream theater (for individuals with disabilities), karate, social programs, church choir, and friendships. He wants to remain part of the downtown Rockville community where he currently lives.

Again, I ask that you please **leave intact all provisions of The Self-Direction Act of 2022**. Instead of making changes to this Act through SB0362, I encourage you and your colleagues to **institute a workgroup** to study the utilization of funds in the DDA's self-direction model as compared to the provider-manager/traditional model.

Sincerely,

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