

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 0742 - State timelines, continuous Medicaid enrollment, and eligibility.

My name is Barbara Hicks. I am a widow/survivor of a 100% disabled veteran who died in 2012. I am a recent breast cancer survivor. I am also the mother and guardian of a 41-year-old daughter who has intellectual disabilities. Issues arise every day that impact her health. She is totally dependent on her Medicaid eligibility and continuous funding.

My daughter's EDD paperwork was handed in mid-June 2025, 6 weeks before the July 31st deadline. She lost her Medicaid on August 1, 2025. The LTSS system showed the redetermination office did not look at her paperwork until August 4th, after her Medicaid had already been turned off. I sent in an appeal the day I heard the Medicaid had been turned off, August 6th. I checked the box on the appeal to continue her services for 30 days but things started falling apart immediately.

The agency through her CFC budget refused to let staff work. Then September 10th DDA turned off her funding. We didn't know that funding had been turned off until we recognized there was a break down in the Fello FMS system. The staff that worked during that time have still not been fully reimbursed for the shifts they worked.

Please understand, we did not totally understand where things were breaking down until after people had been working through several pay periods. On September 13<sup>th</sup>, I received the approval paperwork for her PCP in my mailbox that was dated August 28th but not mailed until September 9th. Please look closely at these dates. All problems stemmed from EDD not looking at the redetermination paperwork before July 31 after having access to the paperwork since mid-June. DDA turned off funding September 10th while I was receiving mail contradicting the actual reality.

I contacted state delegates, I visited Jay Jacob's office, I talked to our local Ombudsman, and I wrote emails to the DDA Regional office. Everyone was sympathetic but no one could solve the problem. The CCS kept asking questions, updated information was constantly generated, but the problem was not close to being solved.

It was not until I left a message with the Governor's office that things turned around. I was immediately connected to the Constituent Services Office, and I was told in just a few days that it took a huge team to work through the problems. My daughter's Medicaid was finally reinstated September 24th.

Even so, many trickle down events have continued happening including DDA turning off her services again in early December, a technical issue that was fixed quickly, but her plan and budget were completely thrown out thus creating more chaos.

As I wrote this, I just read a statement that summarizes my experience as a parent. In my own words from that statement, special needs parenting is the hardest love I've ever known. I am in survival mode every day, constantly on call no matter where I am, preparing for an emergency. You may admire my devotion, but my nervous system is exhausted. I am constantly praised, misunderstood and burning out all at the same time. The system expects sustainability, but I am only one person. I love my daughter fiercely but I never feel completely safe for either of us.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Barbara M Hicks