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House of Representatives  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Harrisburg

February 1, 2017

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Nancy Thaler, Deputy Secretary  
Office of Developmental Programs  
Department of Human Services  
625 Forster Street  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17110

Dear Ms. Thaler:

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the proposed Appendices A through H of the Consolidated and P/FDS Waiver renewal documents from the Office of Developmental Programs that were made available through notice in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on December 3, 2016.

We have heard from many constituents and providers who would be negatively affected by the proposed changes, particularly with the community-inclusion requirement of individuals spending 75% of their time in the community rather than in day programs or workshops. This arbitrary requirement not only takes away an individual's right to choose where and how to receive services, but raises other concerns, such as how services in the community will be provided, the future sustainability of day habilitation and vocational workshops to remain in business and the coordination of transportation, which as you know is an issue in many rural areas of the Commonwealth.

We understand that the intent of the proposed waiver changes is to integrate individuals into the community to the fullest extent possible and that many of the changes are necessary in order to comply with federal Home and Community Based Services requirements. However, the existing service system has made significant strides in becoming "person-centered" and allowing individuals with disabilities the choice of how and where to receive services. Echoing the values and principles set forth by the Department's Everyday Lives: Values in Action, individual choice and family control are key to the growth and success of individuals with disabilities.

Implementing an arbitrary time-in-facility percentage eliminates the choice of individuals. Many individuals enjoy the time spent in day programs and workshops. This is a place where they feel safe, productive and purposeful. Removing the choice of

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individuals – and their families - to continue receiving services in these facilities contradicts the Department’s mission of providing choice and a person-centered approach.

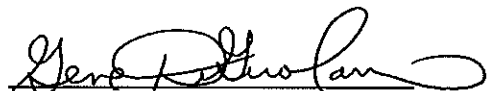
In Maine, a decision to close workshops and day programs was implemented. A study on the impact of these facilities being closed provided evidence of the negative impact it had on individuals with intellectual disabilities. Individuals were unable to find employment, they did not participate in the community consistently and many remained at home with no social interaction. In addition, the cost to taxpayers increased.

We respectfully ask that you reconsider the changes to the waivers. Instead of forcing arbitrary and unrealistically fast limitations on individuals we should allow for flexibility so that a person can be supported based on their individualized needs and circumstances. Thank you for your attention to our request. Please feel free to contact us if you wish to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,



Scott A. Petri  
178<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Gene DiGirolamo  
18<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



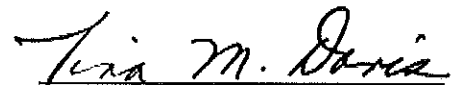
Bernard T. O'Neill  
29<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



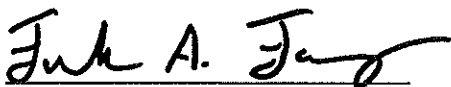
Perry Warren  
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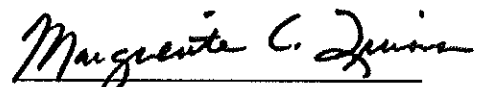
John T. Galloway  
140<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Tina M. Davis  
141<sup>st</sup> Legislative District



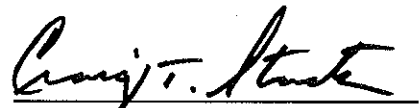
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142<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District



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143<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District



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