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To the Developmental Disabilities Committee Chairs,

We write to call your attention to and urge your opposition to a proposed New York State budget cut that would be devastating to people with disabilities. We are members of the Member and Family Advisory Board of LIFEPlan CCO, one of seven care coordination organizations in New York State that serve adults and children with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

We are alarmed that the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities has submitted an administrative budget action that would cut 23% in funding for all CCOs in the state. This substantial cut is hidden from public view in the Governor's FY 2021-2022 Executive Budget. This new cut is in addition to a 16.2% cut to CCOs that went into effect less than a year ago, on July 1, 2020. If this additional cut is approved 166 million dollars or 39% will have been slashed from the CCO operating budgets in just one year.

We are deeply concerned about this proposed massive cut and its impact on the 110,000 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in New York State who rely on the CCOs to ensure their fair access to medical care and long-term support services. Many of these individuals are unable to advocate for themselves or do not have family to assist them.

In New York State, CCOs fill an essential role, ensuring that each child and adult with intellectual and developmental disabilities has access to needed supports, services, and medical care. CCOs help individuals navigate through complex and sometimes confusing regulations and requirements to gain access to food, housing, care and other essential services.

While we understand that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on the state's financial picture, the magnitude of the proposed cut to the intellectual and developmental disabilities community is not fair or equitable. We have grave concerns that this cut would result in severe reduction of essential care management services to people in need and would jeopardize the very survival of the CCOs. Coupled with other significant cuts in the proposed NYS budget to organizations that provide daily and essential supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, this seem to be an assault on the entire system, and will have devastating consequences for people we love and care about.

Historically, New York State has been a leader in supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. These unprecedented, unfair, and unacceptable cuts will undermine the state's reputation as a leader in this field, and will endanger the lives of some of its most vulnerable citizens.

We ask that you stand with us and oppose these unfair and unacceptable cuts, so that people with disabilities may continue to receive the care they need as citizens of New York State.

Thank you.

Name: _____

Additional Comments: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____
