

**The Arc of Washington State**  
**Stacy Dym, Executive Director**



**Washington State Developmental  
Disabilities Council**  
**Jeremy Norden-Paul, Executive Director**

**Self Advocates In Leadership (SAIL)**  
**Jessica Renner, Administrative Director**



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY ADVOCATES SAY DON'T CUT OUR LIFELINE!**

**September, 23 2020 in Olympia, Washington** - On Monday, September 14, 2020, the Developmental Disabilities Administration, submitted their Decision Package to the Department of Social and Health Services as required by the Office of Financial Management. The dire budget scenario would devastate people with developmental disabilities and their families.

“The Developmental Disabilities Council is very concerned with the harmful impacts these budget reductions will have on people with developmental disabilities and their families” said Jeremy Norden-Paul, Executive Director for the Council. Our state was already lagging behind 40 other states in terms of funding for community-based services, so it’s impossible to contemplate going backwards” he said.

“We’ve seen that time and again, people with developmental disabilities and their families are subjected to deep cuts from which we may never recover,” said Stacy Dym, Executive Director of The Arc of Washington State, a statewide non-profit which advocates for services and funding for people with developmental disabilities and their families. “We never really recovered from the 2008 recession. We were hoping to address the 14,000 people on the waitlist and the highest case manager ratio in the nation, but now we’re back to trying to stave off devastating cuts.” she said.

As part of their decision package, DDA proposes the elimination of eligibility for 6,500 people with developmental disabilities with “lighter care needs”, which means thousands of individuals will lose critical services they have depended on for years. It also includes requiring a higher threshold of needs in order for new clients (both children and adults) to receive care, and rate reductions to providers, many of whom are already barely able to stay afloat working at minimum wage.

“Ensuring people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are not homeless and have access to the critical supports they need to survive and thrive is not optional,” Dym added.

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While no special session has been scheduled to address the anticipated severe budget shortfall, advocates are anxiously waiting for the opportunity to make sure that the Governor and legislators understand how critical these supports are to our community.

“These cuts would be devastating for the developmental disability community. They will affect our everyday life. We just want to protect the services that people have now,” said Jessica Renner, Self-Advocates In Leadership (SAIL), which is a coalition of over 200 people with developmental disabilities working to shape public policy in Washington State.

If you would like more information or would like to schedule an interview, please contact Stacy Dym at (360) 357-5596, ext. 9.

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