February 8, 2018

The Honorable Holly Mitchell, Chair

Senate Committee on Budget

State Capitol, Room 5080

Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Dr. Richard Pan, Chair

Senate Budget Subcommittee #3

State Capitol, Room 5114

Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting, Chair Assembly Committee on Budget

State Capitol, Room 6026

Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Dr. Joaquin Arambula, Chair

Assembly Budget Subcommittee #1

State Capitol, Room 2160

Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: STRONG SUPPORT: Bridge Funding for Dept. of Developmental Services (DDS) Service Provider to maintain critical services**

Dear Chairpersons:

We are writing to request your support for Assemblymember Chris Holden’s proposal to add $25 million to the DDS budget to assist service providers in high cost areas regions to meet the escalating costs for labor and other essential operations.

[Name of organization & purpose] Our organization provides employment, community living skills training and support for people with developmental disabilities who are working hard to fulfil their potential to become independent and productive members of their communities.

We are struggling due to the extremely high labor costs in our area. Due to the high costs of housing and other essential living expenses, employers in our area are paying much higher wages to their labor force than many other regions of the State. We simply cannot compete in this labor market and we may not be able to fill our most critical direct support and quality assurance positions this year. In 2017, our loss of quality personnel through turnover exceeded 25% [insert your turnover rate or another compelling fact]. We know that labor costs in our area will increase significantly in 2018 and we have no means of meeting these higher costs. Without help, we do not know how we will be able to continue to serve people in the year ahead.

We are not asking for anything other than the ability hire and hold on to the staff we need to serve the people we are responsible for. Help us continue to meet the needs of Californians with developmental disabilities. Please support the budget request by Assemblymember Chris Holden that will provide modest relief for providers who can document their needs for these funds.

Sincerely,