

Draft for CLASS Act. Support

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I must ask for your attention now, to share with you my reasons for supporting the CLASS Act.

My daughter, (name), is a person with disabilities, and the perfect example of a person who would benefit from the CLASS Act. She has exceeded the dour predictions placed on her, every year of her life. She is a poster example of what is real and doable regarding self direction, the choice of community living and employment for persons with cognitive disabilities. She is a bang for your buck.

(name), age (___), is a person with deafness, she cannot speak or hear. Cerebral Palsy prevents much use of her left arm and hand, and causes contractures which hinder her gait and have produced scoliosis. She has cognitive deficits and must be supported in all medical, legal, and financial matters. Her seizures are controlled, however she has normal pressure hydrocephalus and we will just have to see how that plays out during her aging process.

(Name) has been employed at the same place for 17 years. She works only part time because her capacity to sustain efficient work activity is about 4 hours per day. Almost all of her earned wages go toward her transportation cost (no public transportation is available). She has enough years of employment to receive SSDI, which is how she lives in the community.

She is intuitive, very social, loving, and demonstrative in her advocacy to live as independently as possible. She remembers everyone's birthday, and inquires of everyone's family, prays for those who are ill, and is happy with her life so far. She is trying to save money for another hearing dog, hers died some years ago. She does not expect to be wealthy or to gain the favor of persons who are. She has come to learn that everyone has deficits. She does not understand powerful people, because she has never had any real power over her circumstances.

I have shared with you my daughter's disabilities so that you will understand the potential of persons with significant disabilities; that they can and do self select opportunities to contribute to their community, pay taxes, pay rent, pay for transportation and efficiently use the public dollars which support community living.

You cannot know her situation unless you have the eye of wisdom to see her just as she is, not broken, but living a life she has determined as best she can. (name) deserves the opportunity, and will assume the responsibility of contributions for her long term care if you provide her with the chance.

Finally, I want to discuss the value of the CLASS plan from a parent's perspective. In the course of time I may not be around to advocate for (name). It would give me a great sense of peace to know that her long-term care was taken care of, and that she could continue to lead a self-directed life with community supports. It would also give me great pride to know that she earned those benefits through her own self-direction and employment.

In the terms of my (state) heritage, **"This dog will hunt"**! This is the season to act. Support the CLASS Act; have some faith in your own calculations and fellow members who designed this plan. In these years of divisiveness and wrangling about most things, be united and committed in this one thing.

Thank you for your attention and time in reading this letter.

(name)

(city and state)