



Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Legislator \_\_\_\_\_:

On behalf of the thousands of self-advocates supported by a NYSARC Inc. Chapter, we want to take this opportunity to let you know how much we value our quality direct support professionals (DSPs) who support us every day in every aspect of our lives. Regardless of where we live or work we must have quality staff to support our success. We rely on DSPs 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Despite the low pay, DSPs are expected to support our choices and to make sure we are safe and healthy. They are required to follow strict policies and procedure and the training requirements are tough. They work under constant pressure from layers of state and agency specific guidelines, reviews and assessments. We are so thankful that so many of our DSPs stay in spite of all this.

Staff vacancy rates are on the rise due to the insufficient pay scale that our non-profit agencies can provide. Many of our staff have to work 2 or 3 jobs just to make ends meet. We are concerned about the stress this places on them and their families. We will certainly continue to lose many qualified, energetic committed and passionate, experienced staff.

We are asking that you to help our DSPs stay in the field that they love. Ensure that the people who support us, stay with us. You can do that by making sure this crucial workforce receives a living wage. Our quality of life depends directly on the quality of staff that assist us.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_