Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:

On behalf of the Community Residential Services Association (CRSA), I want to thank you for including funding to increase the rate for supported living providers by 3% effective January 1, 2021. This increase will allow usto stay ahead of the minimum wage increase scheduled for January 1, 2021.

Supported living agencies provide services and support for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live in their home community. Over 21 million service hours are delivered each year for approximately 4,600 clients. The majority of our clients receive care 24 hours per day, seven days a week.

Supported living’s direct care staff are the foundation of our work. Our staff have a calling to perform this work, work that is physically and mentally exhausting. And they do this for a wage that is just slightly above minimum wage.

As a result of this low wage, turnover in supported living is now at 52%; our staff leave for jobs in home care, fast food and other industries that can pay a livable wage. This turnover rate has a devastating impact on our clients and their families. Continuity of care is vital to ensure quality supports, and our care suffers because of this turnover.

Without a rate increase to cover the January 1, 2021 minimum wage inflationary increase, we will lose the progress that we’ve collectively made to keep our entry level wage above the minimum wage.

Again, thank you for the funding increase for supported living providers in the Senate budget. I ask that you support this provision and include it in the final legislative budget.

Sincerely,