

# ***ID/A COALITION***

***THE INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES AND AUTISM SERVICES COALITION OF PENNSYLVANIA***

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January 13, 2012

The Honorable Tom Corbett  
Governor of Pennsylvania  
225 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Corbett:

The Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Services Coalition, a group representing both consumers and providers of services provided to people with intellectual disabilities and people with autism spectrum disorders, is concerned with reports that the Department of Public Welfare is planning to apply an assets test that may deny food stamps for many Pennsylvanians with disabilities and their families.

Food stamps are essential to many Pennsylvanians with disabilities. Eliminating this support will hurt people with disabilities who have limited resources and rely upon the assistance of the Commonwealth. The impact on people needing services and lacking substantial resources must be considered.

Adverse financial impacts on Commonwealth must also be considered. For example, the loss of food stamps by individuals living in group homes will require state-funded programs to use state funding to offset the loss of food stamps by individuals. Currently, the use of food stamps lessens the costs that the Commonwealth incurs in providing for room and board for individuals with disabilities living in group homes. If food stamps are lost to the residents, millions of dollars would have to be generated to compensate for that loss. In addition, the assessments required in imposing a stricter assets test would likely require millions of dollars in additional state resources that could be used instead to aid people needing services and supports.

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The Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Services Coalition urges you to reconsider the application of an assets test for food stamps. Please do not draw essential resources away from Pennsylvanians with disabilities.

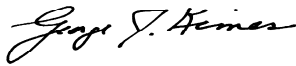
Sincerely,



Mark Murphy, Chief Executive Officer  
Disability Rights Network of PA



Shirley A. Walker, President and  
Pennsylvania Advocacy and Resources  
for Autism and Intellectual Disabilities



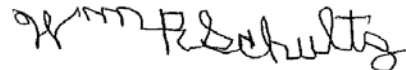
George J. Kimes, Executive Director  
Pennsylvania Community Providers Association



Eugene Bianco, President and CEO  
Pennsylvania Association of  
Rehabilitation Facilities



Maureen Westcott, Public Policy Advocate  
The Arc of Pennsylvania



William R. Schultz, Board President  
United Cerebral Palsy of Pennsylvania

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THE BH COALITION WAS FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE MH/MR COALITION AND INCLUDES ALL MAJOR ASSOCIATIONS REPRESENTING  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS AND SERVICES IN PENNSYLVANIA.  
FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACT ANY OF THE ORGANIZATIONS LISTED:

MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION IN PA (717.346.0549)  
DISABILITY RIGHTS NETWORK (1.800.692.7443)  
PA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND AGING COALITION (717.541.4219)  
MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL RETARDATION PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA (717.232.7554)

PA ASSOCIATION OF REHABILITATION FACILITIES (717.657.7608)  
PA COMMUNITY PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION (717.364.3280)  
PA MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION (717.564.4930)