

Virginia Casey

My name is Virginia Casey and I just moved from Henrico to Williamsburg. I'm almost 40 years old. I have autism, intellectual disability, and mild cerebral palsy. I like to play video games and read books. I'm really smart, but I need help with lots of things.

After 20 years on the waiver wait list, I finally got it last year after mom and dad turned 70 and got sick with cancer and heart disease. Now, I have an attendant who helps me around the house and takes me places. I like being with Mom and Dad but they're old. When it's time the waiver will help me live in another home where everybody is like family just like your home and most everybody else.

I had to wait too long to get the DD Waiver and it was really hard on Mom and Dad.

Please help give DD Waivers to my friends on Priority one – they really need it. Don't make them wait like I did.

Thank you!

Cheryl Emory – Virginia's Mom

Virginia and I are asking you to support The Arc of Virginia's Legislative Agenda.

I'm Cheryl Emory, Virginia's mom. She is amazing. I'm now in remission from Cancer and while I have lifelong side effects, I now feel pretty good. But, when I last talked with you, I was begging for Virginia to get the DD waiver. I had just finished a grueling regime of chemo and radiation, I was in constant pain, I weighed 100 pounds, I was very weak and I was 69 years old. Even then, Virginia was denied a waiver. Then, my husband had a two heart attacks and triple bypass surgery. Finally, Virginia was granted a waiver and we are very grateful.

Please fix this problem for all persons who are Priority One on the DD Waiver wait list. No family should have to endure what we did.

While the DD waiver is now helping Virginia with in-home attendant care, the attendant pay is very low making it difficult to find competent caregivers. Similarly, the rates for supportive living are low. I'm active with a non-profit, L'Arche Metro Richmond, and we provide lots of activities and events for persons with disabilities. We partner with other providers so their residents can enjoy our events. Sadly, because the pay is so low, residential providers often do not have the staff to bring their residents to events.

In summary, I have 2 main requests:

First, please fund DD Waivers for all on the Priority 1 list. These Virginians are at extreme risk.

Second, please increase the pay for supportive living so that providers can attract caregivers and make community engagement and inclusion possible.

Thank you.

Virginia Casey 2021

