

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to state my opinion as a parent of a child with a developmental disability on the proposed changes to FSSP reimbursements. While I think it is within your purview to make adjustments and limits, consider the following:

Limiting recreation funding to \$650 per fiscal year, does not come with proper justification. While the document states "when the need of recreation is above and beyond the *typical need*," (italics added) what is the "typical need?" The cost a "typical" family may spend on recreation would **far exceed** \$650 in a fiscal year with camps, museum visits, community center memberships, participation in sports - to name only a few. Recreation for all families is about many things: inclusion and participation in the community, child care and respite (particularly at times when public school is not in session), health and fitness, education and travel. The cost of NOT funding recreation will far exceed affording families with children with developmental delays the recreation their children will benefit from in both the short and long term. Are you going to fund obesity programs, healthcare needs for children with medical conditions associated with a lack of recreation, alternative respite care options if you put a cap on recreation funding?

In addition, some families in the FSSP program are those whose needs do not entirely fit into other state-funded programs that provide far more financial assistance. In other words, families may not be receiving the funding at a higher level that could truly benefit them and to further limit what they could receive through the FSSP would disproportionately hurt the family now and moving forward.

Consider the short- and long-term needs of families with children with developmental disabilities and respond by paying it forward. Provide **now** what you do not want to pay for later. Recreation is a no-brainer and all children in our communities benefit from children participating in their communities and for parents being able to offer their children a wide range of options.

Sincerely,

Heather Alderman