

Dear (Legislator)

My name is (your name here) Sara Maaske and I (your connection to OP here) work for Opportunity Partners. Our organization helps people with different abilities live more independently, learn new skills, find meaningful work and contribute to their communities. I support the work of Opportunity Partners by (your job here) making sure more people in our community understand the value that Opportunity Partners' participants provide to the world. I'm lucky. I get to see this firsthand every day.

(your story here) Part of my job is teaching our participants their role as a citizen in our community and how to advocate for themselves. Last year, I was able to bring a group of participants from Opportunity Partners to the Capitol for a tour and a meeting with Representative Dittrich. The experience was as meaningful to me as it was for them. Each person in the group spent time preparing to meet with the legislator. They sent her a letter, prepared questions about issues that were important to them, and wanted to know what their role could be in improving things they were worried about. It just goes to show that when given an opportunity, people with different abilities can and do add value to our world.

Cuts to programs that serve people with disabilities will put contributing members of our community at risk. People with disabilities will be doubly affected since every state dollar is matched by a federal dollar. If you cut \$1 from the state budget, people with disabilities lose \$2 in services.

I'd like to share some facts with you about Opportunity Partners

- We provide services for nearly 1,500 people each year
- We employ over 500 people who provide these services
- Seventy-five percent of our spending goes to wages, taxes and benefits for these employees
- Our residential participants contributed nearly \$50,000 to their own services in 2008
- 17% of Opportunity Partners' revenue is earned through contract work and 8% of our revenue is from other private sources.

Help us be part solution as we find innovative ways to reduce costs for everyone. That's why Opportunity Partners is working with ARRM to reform the system and why I will be at the Capitol on Thursday, Feb. 12. I would like to schedule a meeting with you and talk about how you can support ARRM's efforts.

I will call to schedule an appointment.

Best regards,