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The Arc of Pennsylvania Responds to Finalized 2022-2023 PA State Budget

HARRISBURG, PA (July 14, 2022) --- The finalized 2022-2023 PA State \$45.2 billion budget, unveiled on July 7, 2022, is the initial step the Commonwealth needs to take to invest in the Intellectual and Developmental Disability (IDD) community and the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) system that supports them in their communities.

Executive Director, Sherri Landis states that, “We appreciate the General Assembly passing a budget that reflected many of the Governor’s priorities for HCBS; however, we are disappointed that additional dollars were not allocated to specifically address the Direct Support Professional (DSP) crisis that self-advocates, families, and providers have been advocating for these past months.”

This budget does include:

- Provides \$18.8 million towards removing 732 individuals with IDD off the Waiting List and into the Community Living waiver and 100 individuals with IDD off the Waiting List and into the Consolidated waiver;
- Provides funding to implement the new rates for IDD services ODP recommended through the rate refresh process earlier this year;
- Provides funding to continue the 3% increase to Early Intervention B-3 provider rates implemented in July 2021 for the FY 2022-2023;
- Increases Special Education by \$100 million; and
- Creates a HCBS Augmentation Fund in which the savings from the closure of PA’s remaining state center will be utilized to fund HCBS supports for people with IDD, specifically DSP rates, housing, and the Waiting List.

The 2022-2023 State Budget has serious gaps in funding for the IDD community. Most critically, this budget does not provide additional funding to further raise the Direct Support Professional rates in order for providers to be competitive with private companies to recruit and retain DSP staff. The outbreak of the pandemic exacerbated the already present DSP crisis facing the Commonwealth as well as the effects of the great resignation and rising inflation. The greatest impact of this staffing crisis is to the people with disabilities and their families. Throughout the Commonwealth, there are thousands of families are severely impacted by this crisis.

Landis states, “After years of underinvestment, now is the time for Pennsylvania to continue to step up and ensure that the HCBS is robust and provides the supports people with IDD want and need to live in their communities. It is especially critical that our Direct Support Professionals are

compensated at a wage that reflects the value and dedication of their work to support people with IDD in the community.

For 72 years, The Arc of Pennsylvania has worked to ensure that children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities receive the supports and services they need, are included in their community, and have control over their own lives. The non-profit organization is part of The Arc US and is affiliated with local chapters covering 50 counties representing 13,000 members across the Commonwealth. The Arc of Pennsylvania advocates for quality services and to protect the rights of our constituency, providing information and resources to families, and increasing public awareness.

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Editor's Note: The Arc is not an acronym; always refer to us as The Arc, not The ARC, and never ARC. The Arc should be considered as a title or a phrase.