



**TAKE ACTION!** [theydeservemore.com](http://theydeservemore.com)

**THEY DESERVE  
MORE**

Thank you for your strong support of They Deserve More, which has been successfully advocating hard for three years for critically needed funding to support people with developmental disabilities. The spring session of the Illinois General Assembly completed Sunday, June 2, 2019. Those of you who took action can really be proud of your advocacy. In the final days of the legislative session, UCP Seguin constituents were extremely well-represented in the nearly 1,000 calls made and more than 18,000 emails sent to legislators in the budget group. Media stories, compelling videos sharing your stories, our They Deserve More website, witness slips, postcards, countless legislator meetings and other measures put our issue squarely in front of decision-makers. They Deserve More videos - many of which included UCP Seguin participants, families and staff, were viewed more than 115,000 times, so the reach was very large.

The good news: for the third year in a row, those who work with people with disabilities saw a small increase, and for the first year in more than a decade, that increase came in the form of rates - a 3.5% rate increase across the state for those who run residential, day and other community programs. The tough news: our funding has been so woefully lacking for so long that this small increase will not solve our critical staffing shortage, especially with the new, significant increases in the minimum wage.

A small increase is better than none at all, but we will need to press even harder on this new administration and the state legislature. Their quick action to increase the minimum wage addresses the long overdue need for a living wage for many, but created the unintended consequence of accelerating our problem and, unfortunately, leaves us in even worse straits.

The dedicated individuals who work with persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities deserve more ... they desperately NEED more to make ends meet. They are paid less than any other workforce doing similar human services work, and are leaving in droves as Amazon, retail, fast food and other jobs are less strenuous and pay more.

We still don't know exactly how the 3.5% rate increase for this year will be allocated, and how the minimum wage increases will play into all of this, but we will continue fighting for the very best for people with disabilities. Implementation plans will take shape over the next 30 days and we will update you when we have more of those specifics.

Thank you for all you do to support people with disabilities, and we hope we can count on you as our battle continues.

All the best, John Voit and Jim Haptonstahl

Handwritten signature of John Voit in black ink.

Handwritten signature of Jim Haptonstahl in black ink.