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Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz  
Representative Kay Khan  
Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities  
Massachusetts State House  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Madam Chairperson Chang-Diaz and Chairperson Kay Khan;

I am writing to you in support of Senate bill #64 and House bill #172. I support the bill titled "An act Relative to supported decision-making agreements for certain adults with disabilities. I am 32 years old and live in a house with a roommate. I have lived in my own home for 5 years. I was born with Down Syndrome. We have support staff that help us live in our home so that we can lead our own lives.

I like to go out to eat at local restaurants like Longhorns and Pub 99. I take guitar lessons, I used to take singing lessons and drumming lesson as well. I go to the movies every week and can't wait to see all the new movies. I go to bars, concerts, Red Sox games, Celtics, and WWE wrestling shows. I love to go on vacation. I have been to California, Washington D.C., Florida, South Carolina and Pigeon Forge Tennessee. I still want to plan to go to my dream vacation in Hawaii. I have a busy week schedule, I work around 10 hours a week at "The Original Bob's Discount" store. I like hanging out with co-workers. I go to my gym, I grocery shop and do chores around my house and spend time in my neighborhood. What is most important to me is **Not** to be told what to do but to give me choices and help me make decisions. I like "alone" time or "down time" I hang in my "man cave" and watch TV and play video games.

My family is very important and I want to see Mom, Dad and my sisters at least once every week. I really like my staff and my supporters Leigh and Chris. I have a signed Supported decision-making agreement and a signed healthcare proxy as well as a durable power of attorney. My supporters are Mom, my sister Kathryn and friends Leigh and Chris they help me make decisions and explain things to me. I have a lot of medical appointments because when I was 13 I was very sick and had a tracheostomy for 5 years. I had a lot of surgeries and stayed at MGH for a very long time. My parents helped me to understand and decide what I needed to do. When I turned 19 I had my last surgery to fix my tracheal stenosis and now I can breathe and talk. I still go to the doctors but not as much as I used to. It is important that I still get help to understand everything, so I can tell people what I want.

I can make my own decisions when people I trust help as me to understand. My family has always informed me and kept me in the loop so that it's my life. Mom and Dad never wanted guardianship of me they wanted me to learn to make my own decisions. I like that.

Supported decision-making gives me and my family a paper to show other people that I can make my own decisions and that people shouldn't decide things for me but help me decide for myself.

Please vote yes so that Supported decision-making agreements can be put in place for more people to make their own decisions with help just like me.

Sincerely,

Craig R. Kinney