

November 22, 2021

The Honorable Adam Gomez, Senate Chair  
The Honorable Michael J. Finn, House Chair  
Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities  
Massachusetts State House  
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Written Testimony on S 124 and H 272 – Supported Decision-Making

Dear Chairs Gomez and Finn and Members of the Committee:

My name is Amanda Jo Benoit from Pittsfield, MA. SDM is great for me because I get to make my decisions with help from my team. On my SDM team, I have Maggy, Sandy, Diane, and my mother.

I think SDM helps me because I look to Sandy and Maggy for support and if I am with Diane I will speak to her. I also speak to my mom if I need to too.

My SDM Team has helped me join Karate and work on my health. I have also had my SDM team help me at the bank and with my boyfriend Joe.

I have been in the SDM Pilot Project for seven years. My SDM Team has helped me with many things. I want to share with you a video about my SDM story:

<https://supporteddecisions.org/stories-of-supported-decision-making/amandas-story/>

I now have my Green Belt in Taekwondo, I have traveled to many places in the country with my friends, and I am now a World Traveler. I went to London, Paris, and Rome with my friend Maggy last year. In the past year, I have gone through some major health changes and major surgeries, and I leaned on my SDM Team to help me understand what was happening to me and what the doctors were saying. Sandy and my mom helped me through each step. They spoke to me and had a one-on-one discussion and provided me with the big picture of my decision, and I then made the decision to have the surgery on my spine, which was needed because I kept falling and losing feeling in my legs.

In ending, My Voice Matters! Please vote for SDM!

Sincerely,

Amanda Jo Benoit