Hello, my name is Angela Day. I am the President of Families for Effective Autism Treatment of Austin, Texas and the parent of a 14 year old son with Autism. Thank you for letting me speak today. I am here to sound the warning bells that the State of Texas must increased funding and planning for transition for employment and college supports and for people with Autism. It must begin now if we are going to meet the needs of our exponentially growing Autistic community. Our concerns are as follows:

- DARS should establish a plan to maximize college and employment opportunities by focusing on the unique strengths, skills and needs of people with autism spectrum disorders.

- DARS is only planning to increase funding by 3% per year. DARS must account for the huge increase of adults with Autism beginning in 2010 by increasing their budget, staff, and infrastructure.

According to the US Census Bureau, there where over 1,600,000 births in Texas between 1995 and 2000. For every 150 children born in the US, 1 will have Autism. That means that between 2013 and 2018 there will be almost 11,000 additional young adult Texans with Autism. If you start back at 1992, roughly when the Autism surge began, we are looking at 18,000 additional young adults with Autism.

According to the ACT College Board projections, a minimum of 280,000 Texas students will graduate in 2010 and 325,000 in 2018. This confirms that 18,000 additional Autistic adults will graduate from Texas schools between 2010 and 2018.

According to a report from DARS to the Texas Autism Council, as of August of 2007, 859 consumers with ASD were receiving services designated to maximize employment

- Weekly social skills training and counseling provided graduate students in counseling

- Crisis management

- Faculty who are trained about ASDs

- Individualized assistance with registration

- Escort to classes as needed

- Access to special recreational activities

- A student organization with a voice in student government

This program at Midwestern State is just a beginning pilot program, but we believe that with a Medicaid Waiver and federal funding, this program could help many Autistic students become the great intellects of Texas.

The biggest fear that any parent has, the fear that breaks our heart and keeps all of us awake at night is the fear of our children not being independent as adults and wasting away in institutions when we are no longer there to care for them. Please help us help our children with effective transition, college and employment supports that will fulfill our dreams of independent, productive, tax-paying Texans that will be able to take care of themselves when their parents are gone. It is better for our children, it is better for Texas. Our 18,000 children will thank you and we will have such comfort that you cannot imagine.

opportunities. You can see the huge increase from 2007 of 859 consumers to the potential increase of 18,000 consumers by 2018. A meager increase of 3% per year will never meet these peoples needs and we will have all 18,000 people setting, unproductive and non-tax-paying on their parents' couches at best or institutionalized at worst.

That is why we are here before you today to urge you to seek a Medicaid Waiver for Autism Adult Services, similar to the waiver recently created in Pennsylvania. It is only through maximizing federal funding that DARS will be able to meet the demands of this growing population requiring these services in the very near future. It is only by starting now that we can be prepared.

The Medicaid Waiver should also support college support programs such as the one now starting at Midwestern State University that has the following supports for our children:

- Transition visits beginning the sophomore year of high school

- Specialized first-year housing and specialized long-term or crisis housing, if needed

- Specialized selected housemates who are majors in special education or allied fields, and who are trained and committed to being a support team for their housemates with ASDs

- Supervised daily study groups