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Kevin Sturges President
Thomas Baffuto, Executive Director
985 Livingston Avenue
North Brunswick, NJ 08902
T 732.246.2525
F 732.214.1834
www.arcnj.org

Governmental Affairs Update

The Arc of New Jersey's Executive Director Tom Baffuto testified last month at the Department of Human Services Listening Session about funding priorities for the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget. This was a chance to advocate with the Administration and to highlight areas in the service delivery system that need to be addressed in the Governor's funding blueprint for next year. In his testimony, Tom spoke about the need to increase Direct Support Professional wages, the need for an across-the-board increase to the fee-for-service rates, increased behavioral supports rates so that individuals with IDD and mental and behavioral health challenges receive the care they need, and additional funding to increase the Supportive Housing Connection housing vouchers. Also in November, The Arc of NJ's Director of Children's Advocacy, Michael Pearson Jr., testified at the Virtual Department of Health (DOH) Budget Listening Session. Michael urged DOH to increase Early Intervention rates by 5.5% to ensure infants and toddlers continue to receive the time-sensitive services they need. We believe these additional funds are needed to address workforce challenges impacting the system and the growing challenges affecting service provision.