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It is my pleasure to express JESPY House's strong support for RWJBarnabas Health and the renewal of state-appropriated funds to RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH) in the Fiscal Year 2027 NJ State Budget.

JESPY House is a South Orange-based nonprofit established in 1978 which serves 400 adults with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities (IDD). Our clients range in age from 18 to their 70's. JESPY clients come from all over New Jersey and well beyond, seeking the opportunity to build lives of their own choosing in a community they can call their own. Our philosophy promotes individual choice, self-direction, and community living. While JESPY clients have a wide variety of diagnoses, including Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, Acute Anxiety, Pervasive Developmental Disabilities, Language Processing Disorder, and more, they have one thing in common – a thirst to lead an independent life of their own choosing in this tight-knit community

JESPY's mission is to advance independence for the clients we serve. As such, we are a strong proponent of education and helping our clients to advocate for themselves. JESPY depends upon RWJBH to provide our clients with ongoing health education workshops on a wide range of topics throughout the year. These expert-led workshops fully engage our clients, helping them to better understand how to make healthier choices and lead healthier lives. In addition to these workshops, RWJBarnabas Health supports our vaccination programs, allowing us to ensure that our clients have access to preventative health measures.

We have worked closely with RWJBH for several years, and this partnership has been invaluable to our clients and our staff. Their expertise, community outreach infrastructure, and ability to provide resources have been the backbone of our Health and Wellness Program and has greatly benefitted the vulnerable population which we serve. The continuation of State-appropriated funds to RWJBH is essential to the well-being of our clients. We believe that without these funds, the system's ability to support community partners like JESPY House would be significantly reduced.

We greatly value our partnership with RWJBarnabas Health and are enormously grateful for their commitment to building and sustaining healthier communities across New Jersey.

Sincerely,



Audrey Winkler
Executive Director
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