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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Harc Hosts Virtual Public Advocacy Event on February 12 Highlighting 2021 Legislative Agenda**

**February 8, 2021, Hartford, CT** – Harc, Inc., a leading nonprofit provider of services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), will host a virtual advocacy event on February 12, at 10:30 a.m. on their Facebook and YouTube pages. The annual event, known as Have a Harc Day, is traditionally held at the Capitol. The program will feature some of Harc’s self-advocates, provider stories, and family member testimony that highlights the need for legislators to commit to funding Harc’s 2021 Legislative Agenda. Representative Catherine Abercrombie will host the event, and other policymakers are slated to speak, including the Commissioner of the Department of Developmental Services, Jordan Scheff. Governor Lamont will also have a special message for the advocates.

State Rep. Cathy Abercrombie (D-Meriden) and Co-Chair of the legislature’s Human Services Committee said, “I commend Harc, Inc., efforts, commitment and the essential services they offer to those with intellectual disabilities and their families. Now more than ever, we must do everything we can to support this organization and their mission on behalf of this population to make sure they continue providing quality vital services. I encourage our friends to get involved and to find out how to support Harc on their service journey and advocacy.”

Harc’s 2021 Legislative Agenda highlights COVID-19 vaccine and PPE prioritization for individuals with IDD not residing in community settings, more residential and transportation options, additional employment opportunities and supports, better access to quality health care, and ensuring a sustainable direct support workforce. The full agenda can be accessed at [www.harc-ct.org/have-a-harc-day/](http://www.harc-ct.org/have-a-harc-day/).

“While we miss being up at the Capitol in person this year, the virtual nature of our event has allowed us to engage even more members of Harc’s community who would not have been otherwise available for a live and in-person event. This has broadened our advocacy network with new ways of engaging families and legislators,” said Marian Leist, Harc’s Vice President of Advocacy and Business Development.



Harc is also in full agreement with The Alliance on their push for \$461 million in increased funding to community-based nonprofits over the next five years, as laid out in their 2021 Legislative Agenda.

Increased funding is crucial for Harc to maintain quality staff, provide a fair and equitable wage, and ensure that our direct support professional community remains stable.

“The pandemic has tested our resiliency and innovation over the past year, and we have met the challenges. However, the additional costs incurred, coupled with the risks our direct support professionals take on each day just going to work, have stretched us to the breaking point. The ‘do more with less’ mantra no longer applies. We need the appropriate funding to fulfill our mission,” said Ken Cabral, President, and CEO of Harc.

You can view the Have a Harc Day virtual event on February 12, at 10:30 a.m. on [www.facebook.com/HarcInc/](https://www.facebook.com/HarcInc/) or [www.youtube.com/user/HARCIncCT](https://www.youtube.com/user/HARCIncCT).

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*About Harc: Harc was founded in 1951 by visionary parents of children with intellectual disabilities who knew that their children had worth and immense possibilities. They became fierce advocates fighting against exclusion, isolation, discrimination, lack of opportunity, unemployment, and low expectations. Their grassroots efforts led to partnerships with generous individuals, corporations, the United Way, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and other community foundations to raise funds and create life-changing programs. Today, Harc’s services begin at birth and continue throughout the lifespan, with a range of supportive, enrichment, employment, and residential services throughout Greater Hartford for participants and their families. For more information, visit [harc-ct.org](http://harc-ct.org).*