

MINUTES

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 54th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & AGING

Call to Order: By CHAIRMAN JOHN COBB, on February 7, 1995, at 8:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. John Cobb, Chairman (R)
Sen. Charles "Chuck" Swysgood, Vice Chairman (R)
Rep. Beverly Barnhart (D)
Sen. James H. "Jim" Burnett (R)
Rep. Betty Lou Kasten (R)
Sen. John "J.D." Lynch (D)

Members Excused: None.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Lois Steinbeck, Legislative Fiscal Analyst
Connie Huckins, Office of Budget & Program
Planning
Ann Boden, Committee Secretary

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing: DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL & REHABILITATIVE
SERVICES (SRS): Vocational
Rehabilitation/Visual Services;
Disability & Determination Bureau;
Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf.
Executive Action: None.

OVERVIEW VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION & VISUAL SERVICES PROGRAMS

Tape No. 1:A:0.9

Joe Mathews, Administrator, Vocational Rehabilitation Programs, SRS, gave an overview on the Vocational Rehabilitation and Visual Services (VR) Programs. The purpose of these programs is to promote work and independence for Montanans with disabilities. The VR programs are funded with 79% federal funds, and the match on benefits to clients is 78.7% federal funds to 21.3% state funds. VR staff is comprised of rehabilitation counselors and

orientation mobility specialists for the blind who serve all 56 counties.

The VR program works with eligible clients who are of employable age, it is not an entitlement program. The programs are authorized under the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The federal FY is October through September. During FFY94 7,206 eligible Montanans with disabilities were served with a variety of services.

Mr. Mathews briefly discussed the costs per individual client and how costs translate to cost savings for the tax payer once a VR client is gainfully employed in the community, 1994 accomplishments, types of disabilities, types of services and number of people served. **EXHIBIT 1**

He said the goal of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Visual Services programs is to pay for itself by helping "tax users become tax payers." He emphasized that people, even with the most severe disabilities, can work if they are provided with the right support. He commented that over the past several years, disabled people who were institutionalized have since become integrated members of communities.

Questions From Subcommittee Members and Responses:

CHAIRMAN JOHN COBB asked if the Division does any follow-up on people who re-enter the program after unsuccessful attempts at employment. **Mr. Mathews** said that the Department is required by federal law to maintain employment for 60 days. He said that a series of federal mandates will soon require the Department to follow clients from 12 to 36 months longer. He said some clients do re-enter the program after their conditions deteriorate.

REP. BEVERLY BARNHART asked in what way the Division interfaces with the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) program. **Mr. Mathews** said JTPA has designated the VR agency as the manpower training agency for persons with severe disabilities. There is a program operating plan in conjunction with the JTPA program. JTPA referrals usually come from the job service. **REP. BARNHART** asked if VR would be working with the Human Resources Investment Council. **Dr. Peter Blouke, Director, Social & Rehabilitation Service (SRS)** said the Department does want VR to participate with the Human Resources Investment Council activities, but was unsure to what degree.

CHAIRMAN COBB asked to what level the Division helps clients find a job, or if job service is used. **Mr. Mathews** said a lot depends on the individual client, but the Division utilizes every resource possible to help in job placement activities for people with disabilities.

REP. BARNHART asked if VR was working with the School-to-Work Program. **Mr. Mathews** said the School-to-Work Program is a major

initiative in VR. VR is involved in the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), but there is not enough staff to attend IEP meetings. He said VR and the Developmental Disabilities Division is invited to help "bridge the gap" between school and work, particularly in schools for special education.

Mr. Mathews said that VR has two advisory councils: the Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council and the Independent Living Advisory Council. The Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council was designed to be "client oriented," to listen to what people's needs are to try to better serve them. As Administrator of the program, **Mr. Mathews** felt this Council was of extreme value because it kept the Division in touch with constituents.

The Independent Living Council provides independent living services in Montana in partnership with the Vocational Rehabilitation agency. The Council works with the four independent living centers in Montana which provide services to people with very severe disabilities who are unable to work.

REP. BARNHART asked if clients, who want to work sporadically or part time, lose their benefits. **Mr. Mathews** said that this is a problem area. There are people with disabilities, who because if they go to work, lose health care benefits. He reported that VR counselors and the workers in the independent living centers work with the Social Security Administration to help clients keep some of their benefits and continue to be able to work.

Mr. Mathews spoke about the funding requests included in the Governor's Budget for Vocational Rehabilitation and Visual Services; as follows:

Workers' Compensation replacement: In the past, the Division used Workers' Compensation dollars to meet part of its federal match. The 1993 legislature determined the Division needed to move away from the assessment of using Workers' Comp. dollars, and to match federal dollars with general fund money. He said the Workers' Compensation law has since changed and many of the clients who used to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation coming from Workers' Compensation are not eligible now. The VR agency is no longer getting referrals from Workers' Comp. to get the dollars needed to get the federal match. The Division requests to replace Workers' Comp funding with general fund.

Tape No. 1:B:1.3

Fully match federal grant: The requested \$244,906 each year of the biennium is Section 110 money which is for basic vocational rehabilitative services. This money would be used to provide assistant technology to more severely disabled consumers and aid in serving the demand of increased caseloads.

CHAIRMAN COBB asked how this funding would be used. **Mr. Mathews** said to increase private contracts, develop job placement in rural communities and use for adaptive technology.

Extended employment: This is a purely general fund program that is designed for people who do not meet eligibility for DD such as persons with traumatic brain injury or severe emotional illness. It affords an opportunity for an individual who sustains a severe disability to go to a job in a community rehabilitation program.

CHAIRMAN COBB asked how many people are being served now. **Mr. Mathews** said 155 people are currently being served and there is a waiting list of 116 people in Montana wanting to get into extended employment. **CHAIRMAN COBB** asked if jobs were available for the 116 people who are on the waiting list. **Mr. Mathews** replied that there are not necessarily jobs waiting for them, but jobs would be created or people waiting would go into sheltered workshops or community rehabilitation programs.

Provider rate/tuition increase: Vocational Rehabilitation has three types of providers. 1) Rehabilitation facilities; 2) colleges, universities and vo-techs; and 3) all other vendors in Montana that services are purchased from on behalf of clients. The provider rate increase affects all three of these areas.

OVERVIEW ON DISABILITY & DETERMINATION BUREAU

Tape No. 1:B:1.3

Mr. Mathews gave a brief overview of the Disability and Determination Bureau. The Disability and Determination Bureau is a bureau within the Vocational Rehabilitation program. It is financed with 100% federal funds by the Social Security Administration. The bureau is responsible for making and adjudicating disability decisions based on federal guidelines for administering eligibility for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. The federal government randomly reviews the decisions of the bureau and has found Montana's accuracy rating the highest in the nation at 98%.

A person can appeal decisions made by the bureau and ask for a reconsideration, or can carry the appeal to an administrative law judge who has the power to overturn the bureau's decision. It takes 60 days to process a case and costs \$297 per case.

HEARING ON VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION DIVISION

Tape No. 1:B:23.3

Proponents' Testimony:

Jim Smith, Montana Association for Rehabilitation (MAR), said he was also representing the Montana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities. MAR is a membership organization made up of rehabilitation counselors and Montana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities is an organization made up of community rehabilitation programs and facilities. He said the VR program

has met the criteria set out by the legislature. He asked for favorable consideration by the subcommittee for approval of the funding requests outlined on page 6 of EXHIBIT 1. He said this investment is important to the state of Montana and it was in the legislature's best interest to maintain a quality program to protect Montana's investment in its people. He noted the 1.5% rate increase recommendation in the Executive Budget was well appreciated, but didn't come nearly close enough to account for the erosions of inflation in rehabilitation facilities and services.

Wallace Melcher, President/CEO Helena Industries read from his written testimony. EXHIBIT 2

Stacy Crockett, Helena citizen, read from her written testimony. EXHIBIT 3

Greg Engellant, Helena citizen, read from his written testimony. EXHIBIT 4.

Mike Kelly, Director Flathead Industries, Kalispell, said Flathead Industries contracts with the SRS and works closely with the staff of **Mr. Matthews**. He firmly believes Montana is getting "the biggest bang for its dollar" in the private/public sector relationship. He testified that the services provided by Flathead Industries mandated by federal and state law, are solely funded by the state, and the cost for providing services has greatly increased. He spoke in favor of an eight percent provider rate increase each year to help cover cost-of-living adjustments and workers' compensation premiums.

Pat Darby, Coordinator of Placement Services at Easter Seals, Great Falls, read from her written testimony. EXHIBIT 5

Bob LeMieux, private citizen, read his written testimony through the aid of a sign language interpreter. EXHIBIT 6

Ron Jones, former VR client/counselor, asked the subcommittee not to be fooled by his voice because he was profoundly deaf. He said, "If the VR growth is 10 percent per year, why can't they have enough funding to continue the appropriate service they need."

Vernon Hippe, Great Falls citizen, through the aid of an interpreter, said that his years in the School for the Deaf and Blind prepared him for a good life outside and has made him able to work. He strongly encouraged the subcommittee to support the deaf and see that they are treated fairly with hearing people.

Joe Roberts, owner of Queen City Cafe, Helena, said that as employers, he and his wife have had the opportunity to participate with the supported employment program. He said this is a wonderful program and felt it was a win/win situation for employers and employees alike.

June Hermanson, Polson citizen, said she is legally blind. She said that employment is only one aspect of the world of disability, the other part is independent living and she felt that daily problems associated with disability need to be addressed.

Tape No. 2:A:3.3

She stressed that VR and independent living go hand-in-hand and asked for funding for all aspects of the vocational rehabilitation program so that "we people with disabilities can have a full life."

Jan Lavalley Miller, Vice-Chair, Montana Independent Living Council read from her written testimony. **EXHIBIT 7**

Jim Meldrum, Executive Director, Montana Independent Living Project, read from his written testimony. **EXHIBIT 8**

Brian Tocher, North Central Independent Living, spoke about the issue of advocacy/assistance for the disabled consumer. He said when independent living centers are supported, vast areas of services are funded. He, being disabled, attested that it is a wonderful feeling to get off of SSI benefits and to be a taxpaying citizen. He strongly urged the subcommittee to fund services for VR and independent living. He also provided written testimony. **EXHIBIT 9**

Patrick Pope, Executive Director, Meriwether Lewis Institute, read from his written testimony. **EXHIBIT 10**

Ralph Martin, private citizen, read from his written testimony. **EXHIBIT 11**

Scott Birkenbuel, Chairman, VR Advisory Council, said he also is an owner of a small business in Bozeman. He said he fully supports the Governor's proposal for VR. He testified that he utilized VR's services, and that VR spent just under \$5,000 on him in the past year. He indicated that as a small business owner, he pays more in a year for workers' compensation tax than what he received from VR. He felt VR was an outstanding program and asked for the subcommittee's support.

Pat Domme, President, Montana Association for the Blind, spoke in favor of the visual services program. He said the Association works hand-in-hand with VR and if VR is not available for follow-up, then their residential program "is for naught." He said there is a need for more public awareness of the VR program and implored the members for their consideration.

Betty Lou Berg, Secretary, Montana Association for the Blind, said she is also a braille tutor for the school system in Butte. She is a former client of Visual Services, and gained the training needed to continue to live and function independently in the community. She asked for full support of VR/VS funding.

Edward Robbins, Treasurer, Montana Association for the Blind, said he lost his sight 16 years ago, and over the years has recognized what the legislature does with available funding for programs that are needed. The monies for VR have been getting cut for services and counselors' time and travel are essential for the job they provide. He urged funding for funding for the VR/VS program to the fullest extent possible.

Joe Merideth, First Vice-President, Montana Association for the Blind, said he is also on the committee for the summer orientation program. He spoke about the summer program and how the students that come into the program are taught how to become independent and set goals for themselves.

William Klien hans, Montana Association for the Blind, said that through his training provided by Visual Services, he now has the confidence to get out in the public and go to school. He spoke in favor of funding for the rehabilitation instructors so they can travel and do their jobs.

Additional written testimony was provided by **Skip Rovero, Great Falls citizen EXHIBIT 12, An ex-client of VR, no name provided EXHIBIT 13, Linda Hunter, Great Falls citizen, EXHIBIT 14, Janece Honka-Yager, Great Falls citizen, EXHIBIT 15, Tom Osborn, Executive Director, North Central Independent Living Services, Inc., EXHIBIT 16, and Joe Todisco, Executive Director, Living Independently For Today and Tomorrow, EXHIBIT 17.**

Questions From Subcommittee Members and Responses:

CHAIRMAN COBB asked if funding was cut for these programs last session, or whether the demand for services has increased. **Mr. Matthews** replied the demand has increased and one of the problems with the disability population is the enormous amount of time it takes instructors to get to the population in the vast areas in the state.

SEN. J.D. LYNCH expressed his concern regarding the loss of \$7.1 million dollars of federal funds because they weren't matched with state funds. **Mr. Matthews** said the Department did not receive \$900,000 from the federal government to go along with \$244,000 that would have come from the state, thus costing the economy \$7.1 million. The Department didn't request the state funds for the match.

REP. BARNHART asked how the waiting list is dealt with. **Mr. Matthews** said if the division gets to a point where it can't provide adequate funds to all eligible clients, clients existing on caseload receive services first and then those with the most severe disabilities receive services.

HEARING ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVICES FOR THE DEAF

Tape No. 2:A:49.7

Dan Pouliot, Director, Montana Telecommunications Access Program, introduced the members of the telecommunications committee appointed by the Governor. He talked about the growth of relay services, equipment distribution and the need for additional outreach activities. He said approximately 50 applications a month are received. The program is very popular, not only for users, but the general population as well. He anticipates a 13% growth over the next biennium for relay service. He expressed the need for more education and awareness for the service.

Proponents' Testimony:

Ron Bibler, MTAP Board Member, said he sees much more growth coming on in this area because people are becoming aware of the relay service. He asked the subcommittee for their support of this program.

Questions From Subcommittee Members and Responses:

CHAIRMAN COBB asked what the balance of the fund was for TDD. **Dr. Blouke** said he understands that the program has sufficient funds to carry projected expenditures for this biennium, but if expenditures continue at the current rate, it may be difficult in the 1997 biennium to meet the costs of expenditures.

REP. BETTY LOU KASTEN asked if there was a different way to pay for the relay service. **Mr. Pouliot** said there is some discussion going on at the national level, but he didn't feel the program was getting much support. Currently there is a rate paid by consumers for regular telephone service through the funding mechanism of rates by the Public Service Commission.

CHAIRMAN COBB asked if there was a proposal for next session available. **Dr. Blouke** said TDD is administratively attached to SRS. He met with the TDD board and discussed what each roll was for the program. The board oversees policy decisions and SRS makes sure compliance is met with state policies and procedures. **Dr. Blouke** said It is an issue that needs to be determined by the board. **Barbara Ranf, Vice Chairman, Board of Directors, MTAP,** said numerous discussion have been held by the board regarding the budget. There is a possibility of raising the current 10 cent phone service tax, but hopefully through program management, changes will be made to try and meet the growth demands.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 11:38 a.m.

CoBB

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN COBB, Chairman

Ann Boden

ANN BODEN, Secretary

JC/ab

HUMAN SERVICES AND AGING

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee

ROLL CALL

DATE 2-7-95

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
Rep. John Cobb, Chairman	✓		
Rep. Beverly Barnhart	✓		
Rep. Betty Lou Kasten	✓		
Sen. Chuck Swysgood, Vice Chairman	✓		
Sen. J.D. Lynch	✓		
Sen. Jim Burnett	✓		

Vocational Rehabilitation pays for itself

**Vocational
Rehabilitation
benefits
Montana's
economy.**

The FFY94 figures below show the
taxes and reduced public assistance
in relation to the cost of Vocational
Rehabilitation.

	<i>Average cost of vocational rehabilitation per person.....\$9,836</i>
	<i>Annual earnings following rehabilitation.....\$12,075</i>
	<i>Annual taxes on earnings:</i>
	<i>Federal Income Tax.....\$737</i>
	<i>State Income Tax.....\$403</i>
	<i>Medicaid/Social Security Tax.....\$924</i>
	<i>Average Total Taxes per year.....\$2,064</i>
	<i>Average Reduced Public Assistance.....\$375</i>
	<i>Total Taxes + Reduced Public Assistance..\$2,439</i>
Employed persons with disabilities pay taxes. They don't consume them.	

A person rehabilitated will repay their entire rehabilitation cost after four years of employment. Note: The average cost includes the administrative and purchased services costs for all clients served divided by the number of clients rehabilitated.

**1994 Accomplishments---Section 110
Vocational Rehabilitation and Visual Services (VR)**

- *VR served 7,206 Montanans with services ranging from evaluation and determination of eligibility to medical treatment, counseling, training, and job placement.*
- *VR successfully rehabilitated 865 Montanans with disabilities.*
 - *The total annual earnings of these Montanans was \$9.2 million*
 - *The average hourly wage earned was \$6.96*
 - *The amount of reduced public assistance was \$302,244*
- *The total cost of the Section 110 program was \$8.4 million, of which \$1.6 million was general fund.*

***Types of Disabilities
Vocational Rehabilitation and Visual Services (VR)***

Orthopedic (injuries, paraplegia, quadriplegia, stroke, multiple sclerosis)---3,541 people served in 1994

Mental (mental illness, mental retardation)---1,689

Visual---585

Hearing---234

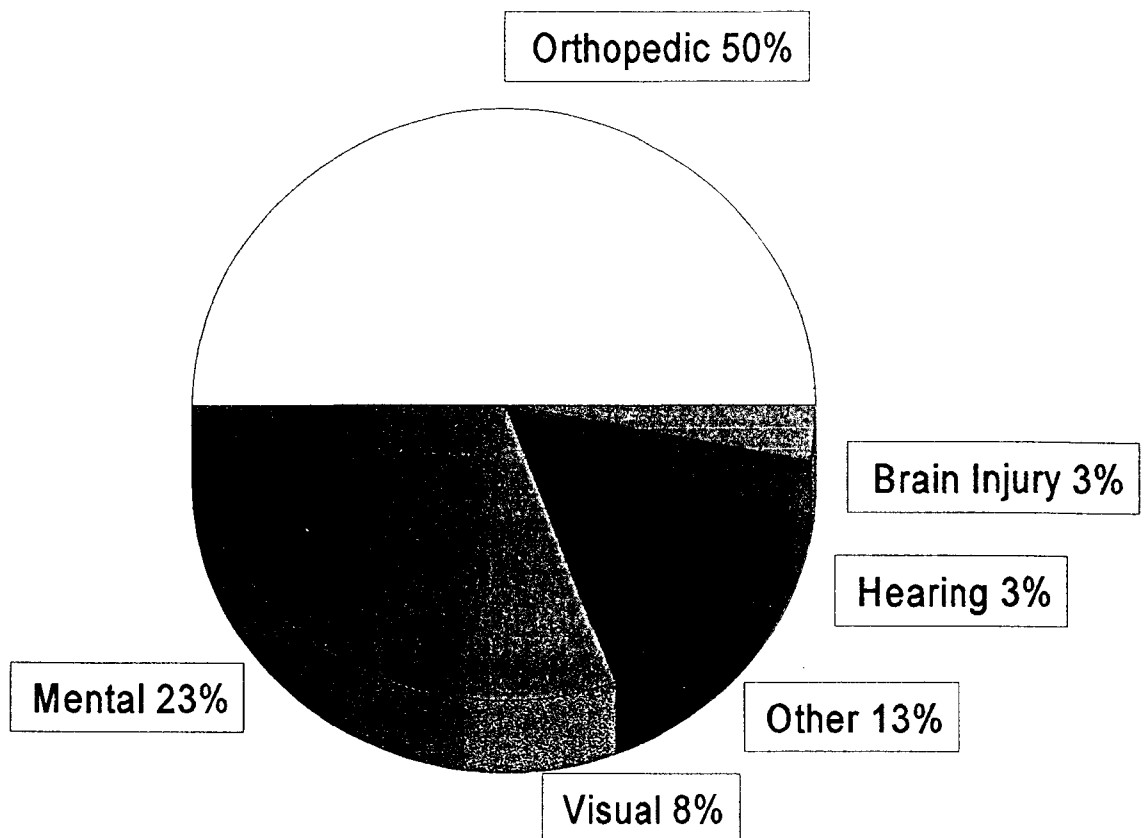
Brain injury---203

Other (epilepsy, cardiac, digestive, respiratory)---954

Total Served---7,206

Served by Type of Disability

Vocational Rehabilitation and Visual Services



Types of Services Vocational Rehabilitation and Visual Services (VR)

- Diagnostic and vocational evaluations***
- Adaptive equipment (adapted computer; hand driving controls; etc.)***
- Training and training materials (university, vo-tech, adult education, on-the-job training)***
- Counseling***
- Job Placement***
- Transportation***
- Post employment***
- Medical assistance***
- Orientation and Mobility instruction (visually impaired)***
- Any service needed to get someone to work***

Funding Requests Included in the Governor's Budget Vocational Rehabilitation & Visual Services (VR)

Funding Request	FY 1996		FY 1997	
	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds
<p>Fully match federal grant This request will allow VR to fully match its federal grant. The additional funding will be used to address the unmet needs of disabled Montanans, provide services to more clients--particularly those that are severely disabled--and to meet the additional federal requirements that were imposed when the Rehab Act of 1973 was amended in 1992.</p>	\$244,906	\$1,149,793	\$244,906	\$1,149,793
<p>Workers' Compensation replacement This request will replace Workers' Comp funding with general fund because of the declining number of Workers Comp cases and the disparity between the Workers Comp and the VR programs. This change is necessary to avoid conflicts with current federal and state laws as well as to keep pace with the current caseload and federal demands. This is the final phase of the three year funding switch approved by the 1993 Legislature. This request does not increase the total budget of the program.</p>	\$192,087	\$0	\$192,087	\$0
<p>Extended employment (EE) This request increases extended employment services because of the long waiting list for those services. During previous legislatures, VR advocates proposed expanding EE services with special emphasis on serving people who are head injured and need help in community reintegration. Approximately 17 more clients will be served.</p>	\$90,133	\$90,133	\$90,133	\$90,133
<p>Provider rate/tuition increase This request will cover the rising costs for client services--i.e., tuition, community rehab programs, adaptive equipment, medical, etc.--by providing a cost of living increase. This will not increase services, but allow the program to continue to offer the same level of services.</p>	\$90,818	\$425,334	\$136,828	\$622,886

VR Testimony
February 7, 1995

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Wallace Melcher and I am the President/CEO of Helena Industries, Inc. here in Helena, Montana. Helena Industries is a private, non-profit corporation that provides services to persons with disabilities. One of the primary funding sources for these services is the Vocational Rehabilitation Division of the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.

To assist persons with disabilities to obtain their Vocational and Independent Living objectives, Helena Industries provides services such as the following: Vocational Evaluation to determine a person's vocational aptitudes and interests; Work Adjustment Training to assist a person in acquiring job finding and work related skills; Job Placement and Supported Employment to help a person find employment in the community and to give any assistance needed to learn and retain the job. We also provide assistance to persons who have needs in the area of Independent Living. This service consists of helping to find appropriate housing, helping to apply for benefits and teaching the skills of community living.

The mission of Helena Industries is to assist people with disabilities to make choices regarding their vocational lives and then to help them make plans to implement their choices. More specifically, we develop a written rehabilitation plan that is based on the interests, skill levels and dreams of each person. Within this plan we identify what assistance and training the consumer of our services will need. Paramount in our planning and training is the philosophy that the person's job skills should be meaningful, personally satisfying and of monetary value to an employer. We emphasize this latter

attribute, because it is entirely possible that we could teach skills that are generally meaningful and that the consumer may even enjoy, but that, in the final analysis, is of no value to an employer. Training of this variety would never satisfy our mission and philosophy which holds that people with disabilities can work at typical and important jobs in the workplace and that these jobs can provide them with partial or complete financial independence. People that go through our services learn to pride themselves on what they are contributing to society, not what they can take from it.

To illustrate this point, the persons we placed in competitive employment and had working within our facility during fiscal year 1994 earned approximately \$600,000 in wages which equates their paying approximately \$122,940 in State and Federal taxes. Obviously, these individuals, despite their disabilities, were working to provide for themselves financially and were giving back to the system at the same time. Equally important, however, they were enjoying the self-respect and dignity that can only come through the ethic and value of good, honest work.

With regard to the future of our services, it is critical that the funding that this committee has endorsed in the past, continue. In addition, on behalf of the Montana Association for Rehabilitation and the Montana Association for Rehabilitation Facilities, I ask you to support the measures in Governor Racicot's budget that fully fund the federal Vocational Rehabilitation grants, supply the final replacement monies for diminishing Worker's Compensation funds and expand the Extended Employment Program by 17 individuals. With regard to the Governor's proposal to adjust service rates by 1.5%, we appreciate his recognizing the need for additional funding as our costs for providing services continue to grow. The actual growth in our costs is much higher, however, than the 1.5% adjustment addresses. This committee will

hear testimony during this hearing and at the hearing for Developmental Disabilities tomorrow that will document that the actual rate increase needed is around 8%. This figure is based on a study that was done on the average adjustments that employees have received over the past 6 fiscal years compared to the rise in the Consumer Price Index over the same period. It has become progressively more difficult to recruit and retain qualified employees as the economy has improved and unemployment in many communities has dropped to very low levels. When employees, particularly at the entry level, can find jobs that are much less demanding and, in many cases pay the same or more as the work we offer, they are choosing to work elsewhere. I request that the committee consider carefully the testimony it will hear in this area over the next two days. The number and quality of employees that we are able to attract and hold determine the quality of services that we are able to provide for persons with disabilities on behalf of the State of Montana.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I thank the committee for the support it has given Vocational Rehabilitation Services in the past. I look forward to your future support as, together we help Montanans with disabilities define the future.

Wallace A. Melcher
MAR/MARF
1325 Helena Avenue
Helena, Montana 59601
442-8632

Chairman and Committee Members:

My name is Stacy Crockett and I'm from Helena. I'm here to testify in favor of Governor Rocicots' Recommendations for Voc Rehab. In 1988 I was a senior at Capital High School. I was a straight A student. I was very outgoing and very confident in myself. I had earned full ride scholarships to both of the Universities in Montana. I had also received a scholarship for St Cloud University in Minnesota. My plan for life was to become a Genetic Research Scientist. I do believe in my heart that this would have come true if it had not been for the injuries I sustained when I was hit by a speeder.

*who was driving on
a suspended license*

The person who hit me, was going 55MPH in a 35MPH zone. He was driving a 4 by 4, 3 Quarter Ton, Ford pickup truck. Three of my friends, and I were in a little Datsun Car. The car was smashed. One of my friends, the driver, was killed instantly. I was sitting behind her. I sustained major injuries....

My Pelvic Bone had been crushed. My Spleen had to be removed because it was damaged beyond repair. My Liver was damaged. My Kidney was damaged. My Bladder burst. My Lungs had collapsed, which led to a Tracheotomy. The Right Temporal Lobe of my Brain had been damaged, which led to left sided weakness, and the most severe, the Aorta Valve to my heart had burst. From the Surgeons Words, I had to be pieced back together.

I was in the hospital from March 30th until the last week of June. The cost being close to \$100,000 dollars. This was right after the accident. I've been in the hospital multiple times since then. The last time being 3 weeks in July 1991 for Brain Surgery, costing around \$30,000 dollars.

The Brain Damage I sustained was from lack of oxygen, and trauma. This damage had caused short term memory loss, and seizures. A problem that I will be dealing with for the rest of my life, because the entire damaged area could not be removed.

Living life without a memory is very hard! I wake up every morning and have no recall of the day before. I can be talking, and forget what I am trying to say. I park my car, and go into the store. When I leave the store, 5 minutes later, I can't find my car. I need a map for everywhere I go, no matter how many times I have been there. I carry a notebook with me everywhere I go, just to write down what I've done, or who I've seen. When people talk to me, I ask them to talk slow so that I can write everything down. I forget which clothes I've worn recently. I can't remember who I've talked to on the phone recently. I meet people, and they recognize me, but I have no recall of them. I could go on, and on. This disability I have, effects every part of my life.

It was a year and a half before I could be ready for services. When I was ready, there was only Sheltered Employment, which is not all that a Brain Injured Person needs. We need community based programs, such as transitional, and Independent Living Programs. Programs to teach financial skills, cooking, insurance processing, and assistance with community resources. Programs which can help us return to being productive members of the community.

The items that Governor Racicot included in his budget for Voc. Rehab, will help others like myself, continue to improve the quality of their lives. Which, ~~and~~ⁱⁿ the long run, is cheaper for the Tax Payer to rehabilitate someone to become gainfully employed, rather than paying them not to work.

I'll close my speech by saying if I don't keep all the paper work on what I've said today, and who I've talked to, then tomorrow I may not even remember being here, That's my disability.

Thank You,

Stacy Crockett

EXHIBIT 4
DATE 2-7-95
HB

TO: Representative John Cobb, Chairman
Members of Subcommittee on Human Services for
Vocational Rehabilitation

RE: Voc Rehab Extended Employment Program In Support
of Governor Racicot's Recommendations for Voc Rehab

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, my name is Greg
Engellant and I am recovering from a traumatic brain injury.

On September 20, 1982 I was in a farming accident and received
a blow to the left temporal lobe of my brain. I was unconscious
for 6 weeks and two days and in the hospital for a year and a
quarter. I could not walk and was using a wheel chair when I
returned from Craig Hospital. Some people thought I would not
live. As you can see I have recovered from an accident that even
though it has left me with a permanent disability.

I feel very lucky to be here today to tell you that I am one
of the survivors who has seen a variety of successes in my
life. I am thankful for the opportunity to be able to share
with you my experiences.

Initially, I could barely dress myself and needed a lot of
assistance from my family. I remember that I went through a
lot of depression and anger over what had happened to me.
I did not have control of my temper and was frustrated with
the fact that I could not remember things very well. I had

to face the fact that I would probably never be able to use my college education for my work. My dreams would have to be smaller and my life would take a slower pace.

I eventually moved back to Montana from Alaska and started receiving services from Helena Industries. They helped me to prepare myself for employment.

I currently have a position as Office Clerk for the Department of Administration's Classification Bureau. I have a job coach who assists me in organizing my work activities. Through a lot of persistence and perseverance, I am now able to work independently most of the time without direct supervision.

Through the help of Helena Industries and the Supported Employment Program, I now feel a personal accomplishment in being successfully, competitively employed. The ability to work has been a major part of my life. "Equal to having a job is being able to live independently. I could not have done that without having someone assist me at home to help organize my life and to remember all my daily responsibilities.

After the accident I moved to my home in Geraldine for awhile. But I was unable to complete the smallest of tasks, including cleaning and organizing my apartment, paying bills, preparing meals, doing laundry and all the other responsibilities that are important to my life.

Through the assistance of an independent living counselor, I was able to start the up-hill climb to relearn the independent living skills I had previously taken for granted. I now have my own apartment and feel I have regained some of those skills I once had.

I often refer to and use a memory book to help me keep an orderly schedule for work and leisure time. I also record a weekly routine of scheduled tasks.

None of this could have happened without the appropriate and timely service of Helena Industries and the Voc Hab Extended Employment Program. Without Helena Industries, I would not be on the right track. I would not be speaking to you today. Many of us without these services would lose a part of ourselves due to our injuries.

On behalf of all those persons who are or have experienced a traumatic brain injury, please continue to give your support to this program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee.



Greg Engellant

Feb 6, 1995
Dated

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

My name is Pat Darby. I am the Coordinator of Placement Services at Easter Seals in Great Falls. As a contractor with Vocational Rehabilitation, Easter Seals is dedicated to the provision of quality services for people with disabilities and strives diligently to assist them in reaching maximum independence. I have several concerns I would like to share with you today. They are:

- * the need for more EE slots to serve people with the most severe disabilities
- * the urgent need for provider rate increases
- * the need to access Medicaid Waiver funds to serve those with traumatic brain injuries

Easter Seals is currently serving 12 individuals in Extended Employment which is 3 more than our budget allows. In addition there are at least 27 people who need and want services in Great Falls. People with various disabilities - mental illness, physical disabilities, learning disabilities and head injuries - are given a chance to work in a sheltered environment, if necessary, or in the community if possible. They are given a chance to develop work skills, work habits and self-confidence in a supportive setting while reducing their dependence on government subsidies such as social security. The Governor's budget calls for an increase in the number of EE slots statewide. Easter Seals along with the seven other providers of EE services in Montana support this increase. (do we want to tell some individual stories?)

The second need is that of a provider rate increase for those Community Rehabilitation Programs in Montana who provide vocational services in Montana. Providers have been given increases over the years that, while greatly appreciated, have been inadequate when compared to the increases in the cost of doing business in our state. At a time when our workers' comp costs and medical insurance costs have increased ~~drastically~~, providers were given a 2.5% increase. Needless to say, ~~our~~ employees were not awarded cost of living raises. At a time when our economy is improving and jobs are more available, providers across the state are having difficulty getting and keeping qualified staff. For most positions a degree is preferred, if not required, but we are unable to pay a professional salary. In most cases, a certified nursing attendant in a nursing home makes more than our employee with a bachelor's degree and a myriad of professional skills and responsibilities. I can fully understand when these professionals choose to take jobs elsewhere where they are financially rewarded for their education and professionalism. Unless they work more than one job, our staff cannot afford to remain in the jobs. We are very pleased to note that the governor recognizes the need for a rate increase and included 1-1/2% in his budget, we also want you to know that it is not enough. In order to continue to provide quality services for people with disability in our state, we need to hire quality staff. Without a greater increase, we will continue to experience high staff turnover and will struggle to keep our services among the best.

The third issue is that of the need to provide prevocational and supported employment services for people who have survived head injuries. We in the field have noted that these survivors are having difficulty re-entering the world of employment. Between hospital discharge and readiness to return to work they are receiving no services. During this time not only are some skills lost, but so is the motivation and desire to work. If they could receive some interim pre-employment services, the likelihood of a successful return to work will increase. During the last legislative session, you authorized the development of services using Medicaid Waiver funding. Some of the regulations, however, will greatly limit the number of people who are eligible for these services.

The regulations, as they are currently written, indicate that in order to be eligible for pre-vocational and supported employment services, the individual must have resided in an institution or nursing home at some point following their injury. I assure you that every effort is being made to assist these people to live in the community which is much more appropriate than being institutionalized. If these are the only eligible people, only a very few will receive these much-needed services. We need your assistance in affecting a change.

Along these same lines, the regulations state that only those who have been found ineligible for VR services can be served in supported employment under the waiver. VR is serving even the most severely disabled and no longer finds individuals ineligible because their disability is too severe. We are wondering just who, then, will be eligible for this service? We are requesting your assistance on this matter also.

In summary, Easter Seals and other providers in Montana support the governor's proposal for increased EE slots in the state. We urge you to support a fair and reasonable increase in provider rates so that our staff can earn a livable wage. Third, we ask your assistance again to ensure that survivors with brain injuries in Montana can access available services.

Chairman and members

My name is Bob LeMieux.

The rehabilitation programs are very excellent in assisting the deaf students and adults to pursue their career because of rapid technological changes. Indeed they need special training and supported services such as interpreting services and note-taking which facilitate their learning process simultaneously. In a long run they benefit from programs for they have learned to live independently, support themselves, pay taxes, and contribute their times and energy to be involved in the community instead of depending on welfare.

During my 31-year teaching years I always praise and support the Social Rehabilitation Services for being very aggressive and dedicated to provide deaf people opportunity to develop their independent living skills, high self-esteem and self-reliance.

Deaf person told me that his success as assistant professor at the University of Minnesota is due to rehabilitation assistance during his young years. Also other young deaf fellow is a certified financial planner to assist many hearing people with various financial plans. One former deaf Montanan is a marine biologist in the Navy at California. A successful deaf logging contractor employs hearing workers in Montana. Without the rehabilitation assistance deaf people will be hampered by a lack of education, so it will cost the state of Montana a fortune to take care of them. We, deaf people, do not want to ~~be~~ depend~~ent~~ on state.

February 7, 1995

Human Services Joint Appropriations Committee
Capitol Building
Room 108
Helena, MT 59601

Dear Committee Members:

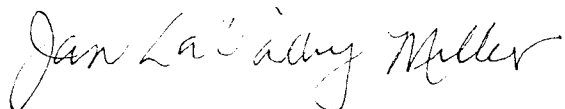
My name is Jan LaValley Miller, the Vice-Chair of the Montana Independent Living Council, and obviously a consumer with a disability of Muscular Dystrophy which I have had for thirty-six years. I am definitely in support of continuation of general fund money for the Montana centers for independent living.

My disability is a progressive one. It has always been my objective to live as independently as possible while maintaining the highest quality of living. As I have gotten physically weaker, I have had to utilize Independent Living Services more and more. Without them I would be at the mercy of nursing home services.

My independence means everything to me, and I will do all I can to protect it. Also I feel I have something valuable to offer. As the Independent Living Services help make me more independent, I can give back through my service to the Montana Independent Living Council and other involvement in my community.

I appreciate your listening to my view as both a consumer and an actively involved citizen.

Sincerely,



Jan LaValley Miller, Vice-Chair
Montana Independent Living Council
921 7th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

Testimony given on February 7, 1995.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the committee

My name is Jim Meldrum. I am the Executive Director of the Montana Independent Living Project and represent all four Independent Living Centers.

Our purpose is to request \$400,000.00 to be attached to the Vocational Rehabilitation Budget. This request was originally presented in the Governor's Budget, but was excluded in the final fiscal analysis and final printing.

These monies will be utilized to provide maintenance and expansion of the REQUIRED core independent living services to individuals with disabilities in Montana to achieve integration, independence, full participation and productivity. Core independent living services are information and referral, independent living skills training, individual/community advocacy and peer counseling.

This proposal is based on the four centers for independent living's ability to maintain the current level of services to the current level of over 800 individual consumers. These services have maintained many consumers' ability to live independently within their community and have reduced or eliminated the possibility of institutional placement. There is significant cost savings and improved quality of life for an individual who remains living independently in their home. For example, included in these statistics are individuals that were provided rehabilitation technology services through the independent living centers. Based on 40 individuals served state wide who needed housing adaptations and modifications to prevent institutionalization, we can safely identify cost savings to Medicaid in excess of \$1,000,000.00 in one year since these individuals are not being served on the Medicaid Waiver.

A large percentage of the independent living centers time is spent on Advocacy and legal assistance. Advocacy and legal assistance is very important in the following ways:

A: These activities provide the way to keep people involved in their communities. Advocacy and legal assistance will keep them in their communities. Individuals with disabilities can provide for their communities by being active in disability issues and providing consultation to various agencies in their communities.

B: Give the opportunity for a quality of life.

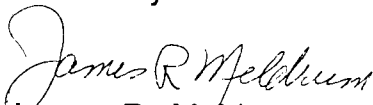
C. help obtain employment and increase opportunities for advancement within their employment opportunities.

I wish to reiterate that this request is to provide for maintenance and expansion of the required core services previously mentioned.

The last session General Fund monies were allocated to develop alternative resources. That challenge was met head on. The following is provided in summary: You allocated \$100,000.00 each year of the biennium. At the beginning of the 1993 Fiscal Year the centers were receiving \$313,000.00 in the program you the funds. At the end of the Fiscal Year, our records show that we had resources of \$477,742.00 or a return on your investment of over 100 fold.

We appreciate your assistance.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James R. Meldrum".

James R. Meldrum
Executive Director

700 2nd Street South #13
Great Falls, Montana 59405
February 6, 1995

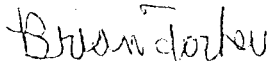
Dear Chairman and Committee Members:

I am writing from the standpoint of a CIL employee. I would like to make the committee aware of the fact that I have a visual impairment. Consequently, I have a firsthand knowledge of the problems our consumers encounter. I strongly believe in the mission of the CILs and I encourage you to allocate monies for these programs.

Continuation of funding to the CILs enables our programs to provide advocacy services to individuals with disabilities in employment situations. This advocacy has been demonstrated to assist individuals to maintain their employment and consequently decrease subsistence on Supplement Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance. One of the greatest experiences I have had was to facilitate the ability of a individual with a disability to continue her employment at a retail store. Through a series of phone contacts and a meeting with her employer NCILS advocated on her behalf which enabled her to continue to be a productive employee, and this service is continually repeated by all the CILs.

The perspective monies address more need than one would imagine and I thank you for your consideration to this matter.

Sincerely,

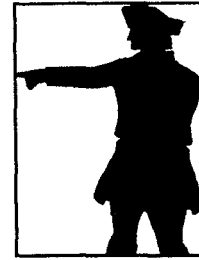


Brian Tocher
Community Access Coordinator

Meriwether Lewis Institute

562 5th Avenue
Helena, Montana 59601
406-442-7416

EXHIBIT 10
DATE 2-7-95
HB _____



Human Services Sub-Committee
2/7/95 Testimony on Vocational Rehabilitation
Pat Pope

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Patrick Pope. I serve as Executive Director of the Meriwether Lewis Institute. We are the only non-profit education and advocacy organization in Montana that is run by and for consumers of mental health services. I have a mental illness, as do all of our voting members. I maintain my illness through a combination of medications, therapy and peer support. I also serve on the Montana Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council and I'm a VR Client.

I am testifying today in support of all the VR budget requests. I would specifically like to address the request for additional General Fund dollars to maximize Federal matching funds and what that could mean for Montana mental health consumers.

Montana's mental health system consistently chooses to use the most expensive, most restrictive type of treatment available at the expense of the development of community based services. The services that are available can only provide for basic survival needs. As a result, we have a system that is care taking, instead of one that helps consumers rejoin society. It is a rare exception when a consumer can escape the public mental health system. I cannot emphasize strongly enough that Montana will never move away from a care taking type of mental health system, until it fully develops rehabilitation programs for mental health consumers.

In the VR Strategic Plan Addendum, People with mental illness have been identified as one of the under served populations. VR services for mental health consumers consists primarily of Supported Employment Job Coaches at the mental health centers. Funding is very limited, so what happens is Job Coaches run themselves ragged trying to find jobs in a difficult job market. When they finally do find a job, and place a consumer, they can only spend a few days helping the consumer before they are needed elsewhere. The result often times is that the consumer decompensates with no support and loses the job or quits, the employer no longer wants to employ consumers, and the Job Coach has to work even harder to find jobs for consumers. Consumers become reluctant to try and work, and Job Coaches get burnt out. I have had six different Job Coaches at Montana House in Helena during the five years I have been a member there. Supported Employment, as well as new and creative programs must be developed if we are to move from care taking, to rehabilitation.

It also makes it good economic sense to develop rehabilitation programs. When I first started receiving community based services in 1990, I attended day treatment and lived in a transitional house. I was costing medicaid about \$2500 a month, or \$30,000 a year. Today, due in large part to receiving VR services, I cost medicaid about \$400 a month or \$4800 a year and if my rehabilitation plan is successful, I will not be receiving medicaid benefits in the near future. This is in addition to being a tax payer once again.

One final point I'd like to address is that of the stigma and prejudice that surrounds people with mental illness, particularly when it comes to employment. Often times it is assumed we are incompetent and unable to handle real, and meaningful work because we happen to have a mental illness.

Meriwether Lewis led one of the greatest expeditions of all times, despite having mental illness, Abraham Lincoln managed to hold a nation together, and Ted Turner seems to be able to make ends meet. Montana mental health consumers are very capable people, but we must have access to the rehabilitation programs that will enable us to take charge of our lives.

Finally, please remember above all else, if we are working, we are using less services, and we are paying taxes.

Thank you.

Chairman Cobb
Human Services Sub-Committee

My name is Ralph Martin, and I hail from Troy, Mt., although the last seven and a half years I've resided in the Gallatin Valley. I am a former client of Vocational Rehabilitation, having graduated in 1991 from Montana State University. Currently I am working part time as a substitute teacher looking for a full time job, which given the job market and my health insurance needs is proving tough to find in the Gallatin Valley.

I am a current member at large of the Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council, which I have chaired for two years. This role combined with that of having been a client has given me a good working perspective of Voc. Rehab., and I tell you all that it is a good organization! The counselors that I know are all dedicated and hard working, mine, Betty Jim out of Butte, was very knowledgeable and helpful to me. The people here in Helena are providing excellent guidance to the program.

What troubles me is the resistance here in the legislature to fully fund the agency. The State of Montana has failed to meet its full federal match for the last six years. We have managed to get by up until now, where other states have taken a position that the most severely disabled are advanced to a priority status and the rest of the population is being put on hold. If this legislature fails to meet our federal match and/or cuts the program we will be looking at having to take the same position other

states have taken. The fact that almost half of Voc. Rehab. clients, 2,568, are in post secondary schools and facing tuition increases over the next two years in excess of 20% is going to cause huge problems for Voc. Rehab..

Also your failure to fully fund Voc. Rehab. in the past has left the agency unable to expand programs such as Supported Employment and Job Placement into areas outside of Montana's largest conglomerates. This has been a real failure for Voc. Rehab. and is something that needs to be addressed. Meeting our federal match would allow us to advance our services and really help put people back to work in rural Montana. I am afraid that if this committee and the legislature as a whole do not respond in a responsible way to the needs of those seeking to rejoin society as working members, others like myself will not be working and participating. And that will be a real shame!

Sincerely



Ralph E. Martin

5470 Violet Rd.
Bozeman, Mt. 59715

My name is Skip Rovero. A sketch of my personal history, or my journey through my life will help me explain why my participation in Extended Employment has meant so much.

I am 51 years old. I suffered a severe nervous break during the summer of 1960 after my junior year at Great Falls High School. It was a difficult summer, including treatment at Deaconess Hospital in Great Falls. The next academic year I was able to graduate with honors from Great Falls High School. In the fall of 1961, I entered a private liberal arts college in Minnesota and graduated in History with an accreditation in secondary teaching in 1965.

My summer 1960 diagnosis, paranoid schizophrenia, still holds today. Even so, I've taught social studies and history in three public secondary schools in Montana, getting three pink slips in five years of teaching. While my teaching skills were adequate, at times my emotional stability was not.

After the 1972-73 academic year, my last as a contracted teacher, I lost or quit from, for one reason or another, many jobs (many times because of my emotional situation or occasionally economic or other conditions. My resume lengthened to four pages.

I was married in 1979. A fairly good marriage went south and ended in separation and divorce.

I was unemployed, living with my elderly parents for more than a

year. I was devastated. I was referred to Voc Rehab, and entered Extended Employment, a program administered by Easter Seals at the Adult Training Center in Great Falls.

Extended Employment has helped reconstruct my life. I received much help from family, friends, minister, and health professionals in Great Falls, as well.

My work through Extended Employment at Easter Seals has become an important anchor in my life. Since November of 1990, the Extended Employment Program has provided a work place where I have reassembled my work and social skills in a positive, supportive environment.

I am a native Montana^f, born in Glendive, and raised in Great Falls, who has worked most of my adult life. I take great satisfaction in knowing that tax dollars from me and fellow Montanans are being put to such good use.

Since about January, 1992, when my attendance in the Extended Employment Program at Easter Seals became more dependable, I have been able to put my clerical skills to very good use, both for my benefit and for the staff at Easter Seals.

Some of the skills I have sharpened are copying, filing, alphabetizing, and entry-level accounting chores. I also help with fund-raising projects, the Center's professional library (which I

cataloged and arranged), inventory maintenance and distribution, and other work as assigned.

I have not suffered severe economic hardship in my life, but I have had more than my share of heartache.

The earned (and I stress earned) wages and the emotional and social support given by the Easter Seal staff as a service provider has been of great benefit to my life.

Investing in reclaiming lives of Montanans who have had long term emotional difficulties is dollars well spent, which (in my case) pays great dividends.

I strongly recommend that the Human Services Committee and the 1995 legislature support Governor Racicot's recommendations to expand the number of Extended Employment slots. To do otherwise would not be true to the best interests of all Montana's citizens, and especially to those in circumstances similar to mine.

The two most important parts of my life are my six year old daughter and my work in this fine program.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to be a part of Extended Employment and allowing me to testify at this hearing.

Skip Rovero

Great Falls, MT

c/dec/skip

To whom it may concern,

I was injured in an industrial accident 8 years ago. The accident left me unable to perform the heavy type of work I was used to. I had to be retrained in another field in order to safely carry on in the employment field. I got involved in Vocational Rehabilitation Services who assisted me in realizing my own potential in various fields. Through hands on testing, evaluations and consulting with a VR counselor I was able to choose a new profession. Together with my counselor we were able to set goals, develop a plan to reach the goals and follow through with the plan. VR gave me the tools, support and guidance I needed to reach my goals. The counselor took time for me for problem solving on a regular basis. If it wasn't for the expertise and knowledge of the counselor and services offered through VR I would not be in the position I am today. Today I am a productive member of society and not a liability. VR played an instrumental role in my successes of today.

A very satisfied and grateful ex-client of VR.

February 6, 1995

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

In 1984, at the age of 26, I was diagnosed with Laryngeal Cancer and a Hemilaryngectomy was performed. This left me with 1/2 of 1 vocal cord to speak with. I was left without a speaking voice for many months. After the surgery I had to participate in extensive speech therapy to learn how to properly use what was left of my voice. During this recovery period I did not have to worry about working because my husband was able to support us.

However, a few years after this, I was faced with a divorce and the dilemma of raising two young boys, alone. I had no formal training or education, and had been dependent upon my husband for support. Due to his inconsistent support, I had no alternative but to apply for AFDC and food stamps. In 1989 I was told about Voc-Rehab by a friend of mine who worked at the Polson Job Service. I then applied to Voc-Rehab for services.

The VR Counselor and myself, worked out a plan and agreed that training for a job where I was not constantly having to exert my voice would be the most appropriate. They then helped me move to Great Falls and I attended the Great Falls Vocational Technical Training Center. I obtained my Associate of Applied Sciences degree in the Medical Secretarial field in 1993 and shortly thereafter started my job search.

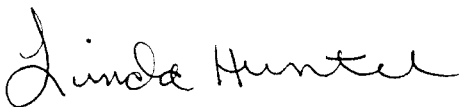
I was referred to Career Development Associates (a part of Easter Seals in Great Falls) for assistance in securing employment. My VR Counselor and myself thought it would be helpful to have a placement specialist assist in explaining to the employer my disability and how to accommodate me. This was a success, as I am now working in a position I obtained through her. I am employed by Northern Rocky Mountain Easter Seals/Goodwill as an Administrative Assistant to the Career Development and Clinical Services Division.

If it weren't for Voc Rehab I would not have had the financial assistance to attend school. However, not only did they provide financial support, but they supported me through the personal struggles of being back in school, dealing with my divorce, and other life dilemmas.

One of the biggest rewards of my life is being employed and being financially dependent solely upon myself. I am no longer receiving any support from the state, but am a contributing tax payer.

I hope you will consider a provider rate increase so that quality services will continue to be available to Montanan's with disabilities.

Sincerely,



Linda Hunter

Attn: Montana Independent
Living Project

2-7-95

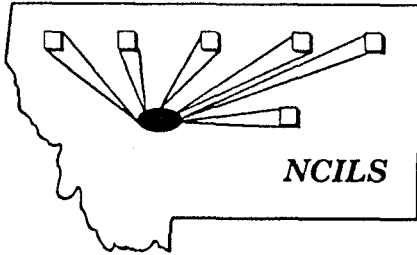
Dear Montana Legislature,

My name is Jamee
Honka-Gager and I
am a client of NCILS.
In the past I've
had problems with my
employer, to the point
where I was ready to
give up and quit my
job. NCILS helped resolve
things at my workplace.
They were wonderful.
People like myself, who
are handicapped need
NCILS. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jamee Honka-Gager

North Central Independent Living Services, Inc.



104 Second St. So., Suite 101
Great Falls, MT 59405
(406) 452-9834
1-800-823-6245 • Voice/TDD

EXHIBIT 16
DATE 2-7-95
HB _____

February 6, 1995

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:


My name is Tom Osborn, Executive Director of North Central Independent Living Services. I am also a consumer, an individual with personal experience with a disability. This testimony is in support of continued general fund moneys for the four Montana Centers for Independent Living (CILs).

In order to maintain the current level of services as well as meet the increasing demand for independent living services provided by the CILs, continuation of general fund money is imperative.

The services that the CILs provide are very cost effective in that they allow the consumer to maintain their home within the community and eliminate a significant cost increase for institution or nursing home placement. This service also provides assistance in maintaining the individual's home setting when the only alternative living arrangement would be a nursing home.

We thank you for your time and consideration given to this matter.

Sincerely,



Tom Osborn
Executive Director

TO

February 6, 1995


Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

My name is Joe Todisco, and I am both a consumer and provider of services for people with disabilities. I am writing as a proponent for the \$400,000 request from the State Independent Living Centers. As a person with a disability (paraplegia), I was introduced to Independent Living after a car accident in 1985. It was the services of Independent Living that gave me the foundation and esteem to start setting goals. As Independent Living provided me with a new foundation, I began to achieve those goals.

Today, I am the Interim Executive Director of Living Independently For Today and Tomorrow (LIFTT) in Billings, MT. I have a B.S. degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, and in 1992, represented the United States in the Paralympic Games in Barcelona, Spain, where I was ranked as 7th in the world in the 200 meters.

I thank you for funding Independent Living as it has provided great opportunities for myself and many of my peers. I would encourage you to continue funding.

Sincerely,



Joe Todisco

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
VISITORS REGISTER

Human Services & Aging

SUB-COMMITTEE

DATE 2-7-95

BILL NO. _____

SPONSOR(S) _____

PLEASE PRINT

PLEASE PRINT

PLEASE PRINT

NAME AND ADDRESS	REPRESENTING	Support	Oppose
Nam Bryant 4400 Central Ave GF, MT	Easter Seals	✓	
Pat Darby-Lreat Falls	Easter Seals	✓	
Scott Birkenbus	Voc Rehab	✓	
Ralph F. Martin Great Falls	"	✓	
Edward C Robbins	Martinez Association Job. B.	X	
Nancy Holt NANCY Holt Great Falls	" " " "	X	
Mike Maloney Great Falls	" " " "	X	
Virginia Satch Great Falls	" " " "	X	
Lottie Ridl Great Falls	" " " "	X	
Alice Ridl Great Falls	" " " "	X	
Jerry Merritt Great Falls	" " " "	X	
Bill Klienhang Great Falls	" " " "	X	
Dick Howse Great Falls	" " " "	X	

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED TESTIMONY WITH SECRETARY. WITNESS STATEMENT FORMS ARE AVAILABLE IF YOU CARE TO SUBMIT WRITTEN TESTIMONY.

HR:1993

wp:visbcom.man

CS-14

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
VISITORS REGISTER

Human Services & Aging

SUB-COMMITTEE

DATE 2-7-95

BILL NO. _____

SPONSOR(S) _____

PLEASE PRINT

PLEASE PRINT

PLEASE PRINT

NAME AND ADDRESS	REPRESENTING	Support	Oppose
Anna Robbins Great falls	Montana Association For Blind	X	
JOE ROBERTS	self - Queen City Cafe	X	
Barbara Larsen 634 Eddy Ave Helena, MT	MonteCH Program - CMCD	X	
Wallace M. Mclure 1345 Helena Ave, Helena, MT	MAR/MARE	X	
Pat Le Muey 3424 12th Ave. S. Great Falls	Mont. Assn. of the Deaf	X	
Howard P. Langley	Mont assn of the Deaf	X	
Pat Lomme - Butte	Mont association for the blind	X	
Billy Ross Bug - Butte	" " " " "	X	
Doreen Wolf	mt ass of the Deaf	X	
Rene P. Wolf	" " " "	X	
Ron Jones	MT Assn of the Deaf	X	
Richard A. Eide	MT Assn of the Deaf	X	
Fern Campbell	MT Assn of the Deaf	X	

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED TESTIMONY WITH SECRETARY. WITNESS STATEMENT FORMS ARE AVAILABLE IF YOU CARE TO SUBMIT WRITTEN TESTIMONY.

HR:1993

wp:visbcom.man

CS-14

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
VISITORS REGISTER

Human Services & Aging

SUB-COMMITTEE

DATE 2/7/95

BILL NO. MTAF/SRS SPONSOR(S) _____

PLEASE PRINT

PLEASE PRINT

PLEASE PRINT

NAME AND ADDRESS	REPRESENTING	Support	Oppose
<u>Theresa Neff</u>	<u>Mont. Assoc of Deaf</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Cecelia Eide</u>	<u>MT Assoc of Deaf</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Lois Foster</u>	<u>MT Assoc of Deaf</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Rolph Foster</u>	<u>MT Assoc of Deaf</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>DAN POULIOT</u>	<u>MT. Telec. Access</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Barbara Rant</u>	<u>(mt telecommunication USWEST - Access Program)</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Kyssa Kuntz</u>	<u>MT. Telecommunications Access Program</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Bob Le Mery</u>	<u>MT. Assn. of Deaf</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Terri Campbell</u>	<u>MT Assn. of Deaf</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Theresa Neff</u>	<u>MT Assoc of Deaf</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Ron Jones</u>	<u>MT Assn of the Deaf</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Rolph Foster</u>	<u>MT Assn of the Deaf</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Lois Foster</u>	<u>MT Assn of the Deaf</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED TESTIMONY WITH SECRETARY. WITNESS STATEMENT FORMS ARE AVAILABLE IF YOU CARE TO SUBMIT WRITTEN TESTIMONY.

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VISITORS REGISTER

Human Services & Aging

SUB-COMMITTEE

DATE 2/7/95

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NAME AND ADDRESS	REPRESENTING	Support	Oppose
Cecelia Eide	MT. ASSN. of Deaf	X	
Parlene Lamping	MT. ASSN. of Deaf	X	
Doreen Wolf	" " "	X	
RENO P WOLF	" " " "	X	
RON BIBLER	MTAP Board Member	X	
Bucky Plaggenmeyer	" " "	X	
Richard A. Eide	MT Assn of the Deaf	X	

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