



DELAWARE ASSOCIATION OF REHABILITATION FACILITIES

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Connie Hughes
Executive Director

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Autism Delaware
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Benedictine OCP
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Center for Disabilities Studies, UD
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Cleanworks Janitorial Services
Client Assistance Program
Community Integrated Services
Community Interactions, Inc.
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DE Council on Gambling Problems
Delaware Mentor Healthcare
Delmarva Community Services
Dove Pointe
Easter Seals Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore
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Gaudenzia Fresh Start
Goodwill Delaware
Homeless Planning Council of DE
Horizon House Delaware
Independent Resources, Inc.
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Kent Sussex Counseling Services
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MOSAIC Delaware
NAMI Delaware
NHS Human Services
Open Door, Inc.
Opportunity Center, Inc.
Psychotherapeutic Services, Inc.
Salvation Army
ResCare / VOCA DE
The Arc of Delaware

To: Members of the Joint Finance Committee

From: Ernest Cole, Ed.D.

DelARF Physical Disabilities Commission

Date: March 4, 2010

Re: JFC -- Division of Services to Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities Budget Hearing

Good afternoon. My name is Ernest Cole and I am the Executive Director of the Freedom Center for Independent Living. I am speaking today as a member of the Physical Disabilities Commission of the Delaware Association of Rehabilitation Facilities.

Educating people with disabilities to manage their own lives, so that they can continue to live in their homes and communities is not only a worthy undertaking, but also a cost effective one. Sound like a dream somewhere in the future? Personal Attendant Services and Adult Day Services are doing this here and now in Delaware. Vickie George will tell you how the programs work for people with disabilities. That is the most important part of all of this. We want to be sure that you understand the value added to the lives of Delaware citizens.

The Personal Attendant Services program allows people with disabilities to hire and schedule their own attendants. The attendant's duties are determined by the needs of the person hiring them; and are flexible enough to extend beyond the home. Personal Attendant Services makes it possible for people with disabilities to confidently live, work and contribute to their communities.

Adult Day programs allow people with disabilities to add structured activities, health monitoring, and education to their lives; thereby providing the opportunity to contribute to their communities, and improve their overall quality-of-life. Most that attend have an acquired disability like a brain injury, a stroke or MS.

Some people with disabilities participate in both Personal Attendant Services and Adult Day Services. Together these services cost \$32,500 a year. Compare that to the average cost of \$78,000 a year for such a person to live at a nursing facility [Genworth 2009 Long Term Care Cost Survey at genworth.com]. Like all of us here today, including the 90 percent of the Delawareans over 50 who speak through AARP [AARP: The Road Ahead], we believe that quality-of-life for people with disabilities is directly proportional to their ability to live in their homes and communities, as long as possible.

We support the Governor's recommended budget which reflects level funding from last year. We recognize that Delaware must be financially sound first, in order to best support vulnerable citizens.