

My name is Artis Perret, RN, ARNP, operator/owner of Heartland Haven Home Plus in Inman Kansas.

I am writing in support of HB 2147 to increase Home Plus facility capacity to 12.

We added 8 private rooms to our home approximately 4 years ago to go into the Home Plus Business of caring for elderly. We have employed 2 C N A/CMA's on days and evenings and one night CMA from 10p-6a. I also have an additional CMA who sleeps at night and is available as needed. I have 2 part-time LPN's who together work a total 30-40 hours a week on top of sharing call with me 24hr/7days a week.

When we initially opened Heartland Haven we admitted several HCBS residents. After several years it was evident that we needed to reduce the amount of HCBS residents we admitted. This decision was made because we could not pay the expenses we had incurred each month. HCBS only pays for the care we provide, not for the room and board. Several residents have run out of money after living here and have had to go on HCBS. A couple of them have homes and could not get them sold so when they passed, that money went back to HCBS to pay HCBS back for what they paid us for their care. We do not get any reimbursement for the amount we have lost while they are on HCBS. The reimbursement we get back from HCBS is about half of what we receive from private pay residents and those with long term care insurance.

If we were able to increase the number of residents we have, we could utilize our staff better and it would be much more efficient. We presently can take care of 8 residents easily with 2 staff members and a nurse. It would be much more efficient and financially feasible for us to stay in business if we were able to have an additional 4 residents.

I have been in the business of elderly care for over 30 years in different capacities. I believe Home Plus facilities are an alternative that should be available for the elderly whether HCBS, private pay or if they have long term care insurance. It is a very good long term care alternative. We have had very positive responses from our residents and the families involved in Heartland Haven. But it is very difficult to make ends meet with only 8 residents even when we decreased the amount of HCBS residents. Giving good quality care is very important to us.

The first place people cut when expenses get tight is staffing. Most residents who come to Home Plus facilities still need assistance with ADL's, personal cares, activities, social needs, home cooked nutritious meals, and a clean house. To be able to accomplish this, a facility will need adequate appropriate staff members. We have to be somewhat competitive in salaries, but being a small business, we do not offer any kind of benefits. The people who work for us are there because they love the people, home atmosphere and the excellent care and attention the people who live at Heartland Haven receive.

Home Plus facilities are the ultimate 'resident centered care'. We continually tell each other we are aiming to make each individual life the best that it can be, no matter what. No matter what their disease, emotional, spiritual, physical state or where they are in the process of dying. I believe other facilities have been encouraged to try harder to become more of a Home Plus model of care, because we all know of the positive benefits these facilities have for the people who live there, work there and visit there.

Please help us stay in business by passing the HB2147. Please call me if you have any questions 316-772-6855.

HOUSE AGING & LTC
DATE: 2/17/11
ATTACHMENT #1