

March 7, 2017

To: Senator Carolyn McGinn, Chair, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Kirk Davis, VP Program Services, Lakemary Center

Re: SB 173

Madam Chair and members of the committee:

The sad truth for Lakemary Center is no different than any other IDD Provider in the state of Kansas. The dramatic impact from a 0% rate increase to the HCBS waiver has and continues to be devastating. We have gone from a progressive, innovative, growth oriented industry leader to feeling like all we can do is barely hang on and do more with less.

Our ability to recruit, hire and retain staff is at an all-time low. Over the last ten years we have seen our average open positions for Direct Support Professionals go from 6 to 30. We never dreamed something like this could happen. Our staff are awesome but fatigued to say the least. Things have to change and now is the time.

It's hard to believe we have to beg year after year for the resources to sustain one of the best service systems in the country bar none. In the Kansas IDD system we are supporting an aging population with needs increasing every day. They should and need to be supported in a manner that all human beings deserve. Without a strong and well trained work force this simply cannot happen. **Now is the time for Kansas to step up and do the right thing** - time to make good on the promise of the past to provide adequate resources to support the wonderful people we serve.

Let's work together to make this happen and put an end to this unnecessary struggle. Thank you for holding this hearing and for your thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

Kirk Davis
Vice President, Program Services
Lakemary Center