

March 7, 2017

To: Sen. Carolyn McGinn and members Senate Ways and Means Committee
Fr: Lara McGrew, Executive Director, Twin Rivers Developmental Supports

Re: SB 173 – Rate Adjustment (3 Year Phased Approach)

My name is Lara McGrew, and I am the Executive Director for Twin River's Developmental Supports, Inc., located in Arkansas City, Kansas. We are a community based agency providing services to Individuals with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities. I have been with this agency for 37 years and I cannot remember a time when we have had so many issues recruiting and retaining staff. By the time we run all background checks, drug and KDOT physicals I am lucky to be able to offer a position to a prospective employee. On top of passing all of the background checks the pay is such that they would rather work elsewhere. Our agency is 10 miles from a Casino and for similar wages they could work for them with less paperwork, more pay, and no behaviors to deal with on a daily basis. We have had to have staff work hours of overtime to fill positions that we can't. We have vacancies we cannot fill even after job fairs and interview days. The quality of supports and services received by those we serve is directly related to our ability to recruit, hire and retain Direct Support Professionals.

Our consumers need consistency. We cannot provide consistency or stability with the turnover rate we currently have. Stability is a critical component in creating a quality of life experience for those we serve. The lack of rate adjustments coupled with the failure of KanCare, has created an unstable HCBS system that is impacting the lives of Kansans with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. This system instability under which we are operating has placed our organization in an unsustainable position. Agencies have had to put a hold on taking individuals in their residential programs due to the inability to find employees to serve our consumers. We have had to do this as well. Kansas has gone from becoming a leader in HCBS to a model state in CRISIS.

Our primary mission is to deliver the highest quality supports and services to those we serve, our CONSUMERS. The quality of life experience of those we serve is directly related to the quality of supports and services received from our organization—Quality of Life.

Lara McGrew—Executive Director