



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 10		DATE: 2/24/2025	
COMMITTEE: Budget			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ALEX LEWIS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: learners.growth@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:16 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am writing to respectfully request that the Fiscal Year 2026 budget include \$2.425 million to properly fund Missouri's Long Term Care Ombudsman Program. This program is a critical resource for long term care residents, ensuring that their concerns are addressed, advocating for quality care and protecting their rights. Currently, the program is under resourced, with ombudsmen managing caseloads that far exceed recommended standards. This strain hinders their ability to provide the personalized support that many residents, especially those without nearby family, desperately need. I draw on personal experience as a former nursing home inspector, former nursing home social worker and former nursing home volunteer. I recall a challenging period when the nursing home where I worked notified us that it would be closing in 30 days. During this crisis, the State Ombudsman Program stepped in. Their dedicated support not only eased the distress of residents and families but also assisted me in securing new placements for the nursing home residents. Their support underscored for me the indispensable role of ombudsmen in safeguarding the well being of people with disabilities and older adults. I urge you to support this funding request. By adequately investing in the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, we can ensure that every long term care resident in Missouri has access to the advocacy and support they deserve.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: BARBIE TODD		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: peanuttodd96@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/23/2025 9:57 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

February 23, 2025Chairman Dirk DeatonChair, House Budget Committee201 W. Capitol Ave., Rm 309Jefferson City, MO 65101Dear Chairman Deaton,As the lead Missouri volunteer for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACSCAN), I would like to submit the following testimony in support of continued funding for theShow-Me Healthy Women Program, the State's tobacco prevention and cessation programs,and access to care through the health insurance that the MO Healthnet Program provides.The Show-Me Healthy Women Program provides breast and cervical cancer screenings andfollow-up services for low-income, uninsured and underinsured women. Deaths from breast andcervical cancer occur more frequently among women who are uninsured or underinsured andmany of those deaths could be avoided by increasing screening rates through the Show-MeHealthy Women Program.Tobacco use claims the lives of 11,000 Missourians each year and costs Missouri over \$3.52 billion inannual health care costs. Funding for comprehensive tobacco prevention and cessation programs helppeople who smoke quit and ultimately save lives and money.Access to comprehensive health insurance coverage through funding of the MO HealthnetProgram helps reduce mortality rates for individuals diagnosed with breast, lung and colorectalcancer and will lead to earlier detection of the disease.Early detection programs like Show-Me Healthy Women have proven to save lives and keepwomen across the state in better physical shape. Tobacco prevention and cessation programshave proven to help reduce the burden of tobacco use in our state. MO Healthnet promotesearlier cancer detection, fewer deaths, and improved outcomes for patients.Funding for these programs not only helps keep our citizens in better physical shape but it helpskeep the state in better financial shape by catching cancers at an early, more treatable stageand keeping people from becoming addicted to the deadly effects of tobacco use.I urge the members of this committee to appropriate the necessary funding for these important,lifesaving programs.If you have any questions or need additional information about ACS CAN, don't hesitate tocontact our ACS CAN Government Relations Director, Emily Kalmer, at emily.kalmer@cancer.org.Thank you,Barbie ToddMissouri State Lead AmbassadorAmerican Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CHE-PEI		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: patkung@wustl.edu	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 11:41 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

As our society continues to age and have more senior residents, long-term care becomes a critical infrastructure to ensure the quality of care and lighten the loads on the sandwich generation who are the most productive demographic. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program plays a crucial role in addressing these issues by providing independent advocacy, helping residents resolve complaints, and ensuring their voices are heard. For Missouri to continue to strive to be the destination state, making it known that we take longterm care issue seriously will strengthen our credibility and attract more populations.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: DAWN SCHMITT		PHONE NUMBER: 314-395-9375	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION SERVICES		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 2644 METRO BLVD			
CITY: MARYLAND HEIGHTS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63043
EMAIL: dschmitt@bis-stl.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 1:00 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

On behalf of Behavior Intervention Services, I am writing in support of a 1.7% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for Developmental Disabilities (DD) Community Programs. Behavior Intervention Services provides essential support to individuals with developmental disabilities in St. Louis Counties, ensuring they receive the quality care and services they need to thrive in their communities. While we understand the constraints of the State Revenue picture, a COLA is necessary to prevent further strain on an already underfunded system. This adjustment ensures that we can continue providing high-quality care, retain skilled staff, and support individuals with disabilities who rely on these services daily. Thank you for your time and consideration. Sincerely, Dawn L. Schmitt
Executive Director Behavior Intervention Services



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: DEBRA J FRASKI		PHONE NUMBER: 573-855-7588	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: CROCKER COMMUNITY SENIOR CENTER		TITLE: CROCKER BOARD OF DIRECTORS	
ADDRESS: 108 ROSE ST			
CITY: CROCKER		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65452
EMAIL: dfraski@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 9:00 PM	
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FUNDING FOR SENIOR CENTERS HAS NOT INCREASED TO MATCH INFLATION. GRANT ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN FARMED OUT TO THE "AAA" OF WHICH "AGING BEST" IS ONE. AGING BEST HAS CHANGED FUNDING PLANS FOR THE SENIOR CENTERS AND THE RURAL CENTERS ARE LOSING FUNDING TO THE URBAN CENTERS. AGING BEST IS REQUIRING THE CENTERS TO PROVIDE "MEALS ON WHEELS" OUT OF THE SENIOR CENTER BUDGET AND IT IS BUSTING THEIR BUDGET. AGING BEST HAS A VERY RESTRICTIVE CONTRACT AND THEY HAVE BEEN TOLD THEY CAN'T MODIFY THE CONTRACT IN ANY WAY. AGING BEST RECEIVES 10% OF THE GRANT FOR ADMINISTRATION. THE CENTERS ALSO COLLECT MONEY LOCALLY THAT THEY USE FOR OPERATIONS AND PROVIDING AMENITIES. AGING BEST REQUIRES THAT THE CENTERS SEND THE LOCAL COLLECTIONS TO THEM SO THAT THEY CAN DISPURSE THOSE FUNDS ALSO AND AGING BEST TAKES 10% OF THOSE FUNDS ALSO. AGING BEST REQUIRES THE CENTERS TO BUY THE MEALS DIRECTLY FROM THEM AND WITH NO ACCOUNTING OR INPUT. THE BUILDINGS ARE LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED AND NO CREDIT IS GIVEN FOR REAL ESTATE UPKEEP OR UTILITIES WHICH ARE SIGNIFICANT INPUTS THAT THE CENTERS DO NOT GET CREDIT FOR. URBAN CENTERS ARE TYPICALLY OWNED BY A GOVERNMENT ENTITY THAT CAN SUBSIDIZE THE REAL ESTATE MAINTENANCE AND UTILITIES. RURAL CENTERS ARE SELF-SUPPORTING OTHER THAN THE GRANT FUNDS. The "AAA" ARE PROVIDING SERVICES TO URBAN CENTERS THAT ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO RURAL CENTERS AT A VERY HIGH COST AND WE ARE TOLD THAT THOSE AMENITIES ARE NOT HEAVILY UTILIZED IN THOSE URBAN AREAS WHICH DIVERTS FUNDING FROM ALL CENTERS AND AWAY FROM THE CORE MISSION OF THE CENTERS. THE CENTER'S CORE MISSION IS TO PROVIDE MEALS AND SOCIALIZATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR SENIORS. WHILE THE OTHER AMENITIES ARE PROBABLY GOOD PROGRAMS, THEY SHOULD BE SUPPORTED LOCALLY AND THE "AAA" SHOULD FOCUS ON THE CORE MISSION. THE SENIOR CENTERS IN RURAL MISSOURI WOULD LIKE TO SEE ANY BUDGET ITEM APPROPRIATED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SENIOR SERVICES WITH REGARD TO FUNDING OF SENIOR CENTERS BE INCREASED AND ALSO RESTRICTED TO ONLY THOSE CORE FUNCTIONS THAT ALL CENTERS PROVIDE AND THAT ANY AMENITIES THAT ARE NOT PART OF THE CORE FUNCTIONS BE SUPPORTED LOCALLY. THERE ARE FOUR SENIOR CENTERS IN PULASKI. THE POPULATION OF EACH CITY WHERE THE CENTERS ARE LOCATED ARE AS FOLLOWS: CROCKER -916 AS OF 2023, DIXON-1,213 AS OF 2023, RICHLAND-1,736 AS OF 2023, AND ST. ROBERTS-5,457 AS OF 2023 AND WAYNESVILLE-5,455 AS OF 2023. PLEASE NOTE THAT ST. ROBERTS & WAYNESVILLE COMBINE TO MAKE ONE CENTER. AGING BEST IS TELLING CROCKER'S CENTER THAT WE MUST SERVE MORE MEALS. CONSIDERING THE FACT THAT OUR CENTER IS MUCH SMALLER THAN THE OTHER CENTERS; THERE IS NO POSSIBLE WAY WE CAN COMPETE.

THE DISTANCE BETWEEN EACH OF THESE CENTERS 12 MILES ONE WAY. THERE IS NO WAY WE CAN COMPETE WITH CENTERS THAT ARE LARGER. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THAT EACH CENTER SHOULD RECEIVE THE SAME PROGRAMS & SERVICES BUT IN A PROPORTIONATE AMOUNT BASED ON POPULATION. THE SMALLER COMMUNITIES STILL HAVE SENIORS IN NEED WHETHER THEY ARE DINE IN, CARRY OUT OR DELIVERED HOMEBOUND. IN ADDITION, WE WERE TOLD THAT WE MUST KEEP TRACK OF OUR IN-KIND HOURS TO HELP US. WHEN ASKED HOW MUCH MONEY WOULD OUR IN-KIND HOURS GIVE BACK TO OUR CENTER OR HOW MANY HOURS DO WE NEED TO REACH A SPECIFIC AMOUNT OF RETURN MONEY, THEY COULD NOT ANSWER. SUPPOSEDLY, THE IN-KIND POT OF MONEY IS \$500,000.00 THAT AGING BEST ALLOCATES. THEY STATED THAT THEY DID NOT KNOW HOW TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION. OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS DESIRES TO BE COOPERATIVE WITH AGING BEST WHILE LOOKING OUT FOR THE BEST INTEREST OF OUR CENTER AND THE SENIORS WE SERVE. WE SIMPLY WANT CONCRETE HONEST ANSWERS IN ORDER TO RUN EFFICIENTLY AND PROVIDE FOR OUR COMMUNITY. PLEASE HELP US SAVE OUR CENTER FROM BEING CLOSED.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: EARL SIMMS		PHONE NUMBER: 636-875-9550	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: PARAQUAD		TITLE: PUBLIC POLICY AND ADVOCACY MANAGER	
ADDRESS: 5240 OAKLAND AVE.			
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63110
EMAIL: earlsimms@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 9:59 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Paraquad is a non-residential Center for Independent Living. Paraquad champions equity and independence for people with disabilities through services, partnerships, education, and advocacy. Paraquad is a strong proponent of the IL movement. The CDS program aligns perfectly with Paraquad's mission and values. Paraquad's Consumer Directed Services (CDS) is a Medicaid-based program that provides personal care attendant services to individuals with disabilities, enabling them to live with greater independence in their community, rather than in a nursing home. We are serving approximately 290 Participants. CDS allows these individuals to choose exactly who they want to help them in their home, often family members or friends. They get to choose someone they trust to provide for their most intimate care needs and feel supported and safe with a caregiver they know. They get to choose who helps them get up and ready for work so that they can contribute to society. Every Paraquad CDS Participant has a CDS Specialist to call them at least monthly to monitor their services and State and EVV compliance and ensure health, safety, and welfare. Every CDS Specialist is also a Paraquad Independent Living Specialist- available to them to meet their independent living goals and specific needs. The Paraquad CDS Specialist provides information and referrals for food, utility assistance, or housing. They do an internal referral to other Paraquad departments for ramp, bath bench, or wheelchair or referral to our accessible gym. The CDS Specialist is a listening and supporting ear to empathize with a health scare or bad news and to rejoice at good news. Paraquad CDS embodies the Independent Living movement that Paraquad embraces. They walk hand-in-hand.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: ERIKA LEONARD		PHONE NUMBER: 573-680-6424	
REPRESENTING: STARLING		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 2046 TRENTON COURT			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65109
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:00 AM	

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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JAMES S SHELLY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: stlshelly@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/22/2025 6:40 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Having parents being in the long term care our family has found it is imperative to have support and advocacy for the patients. I support the bill to improve the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. As I mentioned it plays a crucial role in addressing issues by providing advocacy, helping residents resolve complaints, and ensuring their voices are heard and health improved.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: JASON SCHOTT		PHONE NUMBER: 573-880-8029	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: STE. GENEVIEVE COUNTY SB-40 TAX BOARD		TITLE: CHAIRMAN - BOARD OF DIRECTORS	
ADDRESS: 12430 PAR LANE			
CITY: STE. GENEVIEVE		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63670
EMAIL: major@sgcso.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 9:27 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

My name is Jason Schott and I am the Chairman of the Board for the Ste. Genevieve County SB40 Board. Last fiscal year, the 80 million appropriation for DMH waivers did not happen and was struck from the budget. This put thousands of individuals with specials needs, who need the waivers, on a hold pattern for a year. Locally, for Ste. Genevieve County SB40, that brought us over \$80,000.00 more in funding request, that we did not have, for services that would have been allowed under waivers from the State. This unfortunately happened across the State and caused local taxing entities to have to give the bad news of not being able to fund all the projects that came to us. The lack of services at critical times in a person's life can be life changing and can push the individuals development backwards instead of forward. Many of these individuals rely on us and you to be their voice and advocate. Last year the State spoke how they rolled back the budget and have billions in savings to show the Missouri citizens they are being fiscally responsible. If they budget was rolled back and billions saved, why could the \$80 million not be appropriated for waivers? it would have still showed a roll back and savings that the State presented to the citizens of the State. I realize the Governor has asked for more money that what DMH has asked for in waiver appropriations. I am certain some are wondering why. Keep in mind, this would eliminate a wait list in the State of Missouri. Something that would be a great thing to celebrate for all legislatures. Also, remember, if you take the \$80 million out of what the Governor is asking for, the \$80 million not appropriated last year, then the true amount for this year is realized. I urge everyone on the committee to approve the appropriate amount the Governor has asked for and make this a win for all individuals with special needs in the State. Sincerely, Jason SchottSte. Genevieve CountySB-40 Tax Board



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: JULIE PEETZ		PHONE NUMBER: 314-620-4585	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI ASSOCIATION OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 2027 CHRISTY DR			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: jpeetz@ma4web.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 9:01 AM	

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today regarding funding for Missouri's Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). My name is Julie Peetz, Executive Director of the Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging (ma4), representing Missouri's ten Area Agencies on Aging. In addition to my statement submitted here online, Rebecca Nowlin CEO of Aging Best AAA, and ma4 Board member, is attending today's hearing in person to represent ma4 and the ten Area Agencies on Aging. On behalf of all of us thank you for your continued support throughout the years of behalf of Missouri's seniors and the services the AAAs provide to them. As we look at funding trends from 2009 until now, GR has remained relatively flat at a time that need and costs of providing services grow. As you know, the AAAs play a critical role in the lives of older adults throughout our state. For 150,000 Missouri older adults, AAAs are a lifeline. We provide essential services that empower older adults to remain healthy, independent, and connected to their communities. These services range from home-delivered meals and transportation assistance to in-home care, programs combating social isolation, and senior centers, including the Aging Best Senior Center here in Jefferson City. Today I'd like to call your attention to a freight train coming down the track---meals for seniors.their lifeblood. Specifically the Medicaid Home Delivered Meal (HDM) rate. The HDM program, often known as "Meals on Wheels," provides crucial nutritional support to vulnerable older adults across Missouri. This program has been significantly underfunded for years, creating numerous challenges. These include difficulty hiring and retaining drivers and delivery staff due to low wages, rising food costs, the significant growth in Missouri's 65+ population, the lingering effects of the pandemic, and increased food insecurity among older adults. The current reimbursement rate falls far short of the actual costs incurred by AAAs, placing a severe financial strain on our ability to deliver this vital service and impacting other essential programs for seniors. Because of rising costs of products and wages, the current meals reimbursement rate of \$6.21 is not sufficient to keep this program sustainable. The recently released Mercer Rate Study Report, as well as a survey of our AAAs, agree the rate, must be increased anywhere from \$10.07 to \$10.99 per meal. Based on the 2.2 million meals provided by the AAAs to Missouri's seniors, the cost would be an additional \$3,046,907 to \$3,773,113 in additional annual GR. (The federal government would fund the remaining additional cost of \$5-6 million) If we fail to address this, services will erode, and next year we'll be way behind the 8-ball. We need to start preparing NOW. All of us here---let's think of when we go to the grocery store and the cost of food now. What you spent five years ago, as you know, will not put nearly as much in your cart as what that dollar amount will do today. So what should the AAAs cut in our meals for seniors? These meals are carefully selected---they are nutritionally balanced, no-frills meals---they cannot be reduced if we wish to keep seniors nourished, healthy, and resistant to falls, chronic disease etc. Therefore, we respectfully ask this committee to begin to address this and head off the train wreck.

If we fail to address, the AAA Meals program will literally NOT be sustainable. The most frail people will be placed on waitlists that may never have openings. Later this week, we will follow up with you to share more information about the Mercer study recommendations and the projected cost. Thank you for your time.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: KEVIN E. RHOADES		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: krhoades@project-success.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/23/2025 8:18 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am writing to request inclusion of additional funding of \$2.425 Million in the Missouri State Budget to provide for more staffing and volunteer resources so that Missouri has a Long Term Care Ombudsman that meets recommended guidelines per number of residents. As a Long Term Care Volunteer Ombudsman who has visited a care center nearly every week in St. Peters, MO, I know the work I do helps make sure all residents have an advocate for care quality issues, as well as their rights. It should be a goal in Missouri to have enough paid staff members who can train, supervise and support a force of volunteers who can do this work in every care center in Missouri. Currently, the organization I volunteer for covers 39 Missouri counties with only six staff members and about 25 volunteers. These volunteers put a lot of miles on their vehicles to do this work, as does, especially, the staff. Each staff member can supervise 7 volunteers as well as make visits themselves to facilities. I believe the efforts provided by the ombudsman program provides a benefit to the Missouri taxpayers in helping solve issues at the facilities for these residents, providing better overall oversight of their care in a proactive manner, as well as resolving issues that could turn into large complaints requiring more regulatory and investigate costs downstream. Better funding for the LTC Ombudsman program will also help Missouri, over time, improve overall care quality for our seniors in long term care, which is vital to attract employers and employees to our state long term. Missouri ranks near the bottom in the quality of long term care and this ranking does not bode well for us when being evaluated by those entertaining moving to Missouri. Please support this funding request to ensure that long-term care residents across Missouri have effective advocacy. Thanks very much for your time and consideration in reviewing my testimony.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LARRY P LYNCH		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: ntbfagain@aol.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/22/2025 1:28 PM
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as a family member of a relative that alleged physical abuse several years ago, we had no idea where to turn for help until it was too late. our seniors deserve and have earned the right to be cared for in a professional manner. The ombudsman program is essential for assuring quality care. Please support this bill. Thank You!



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: LESLIE TALKINGTON		PHONE NUMBER: 573-324-2447	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: RUTH JENSEN VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL SERVICES		TITLE: DPM	
ADDRESS: 5 INDUSTRIAL DRIVE			
CITY: BOWLING GREEN		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63334
EMAIL: ltalkingtonrjvrs@sbcglobal.net	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:33 PM

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Our agency writing in support of a 1.7% COLA for DD Community Programs. Community Providers like Ruth Jensen Village Residential Services, Inc., want to increase our capacity and serve more people, but we cannot do that without the partnership of the Budget leaders in MO legislature. In Missouri, we have hundreds of individuals with developmental disabilities stuck on a waitlist for services, along with hundreds more who are currently in inappropriate, unsafe, and costly settings of care. We serve 43 individuals in rural Bowling Green, Missouri. While DD Rates remain below market-level, we understand that the State Revenue picture does not allow for the critical investment into services that is truly necessary to stabilize services. A 1.7% COLA ensures that we can marginally keep up with rising costs in order to continue to support the individuals with disabilities who rely on these services each day.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MIA GONZALEZ		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: mia.gonzalez@behavioralhealth.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 1:26 PM
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I am writing in support of a 1.7% COLA for DD Community Programs. In Missouri, we have hundreds of individuals with developmental disabilities stuck on a waitlist for services, along with hundreds more who are currently in inappropriate, unsafe, and costly settings of care. Community Providers like Behavioral Health Allies want to increase our capacity and serve more people, but we cannot do that without the partnership of the Budget leaders in MO legislature. While DD Rates remain below market-level, we understand that the State Revenue picture does not allow for the critical investment into services that is truly necessary to stabilize services. A 1.7% COLA ensures that we can marginally keep up with rising costs in order to continue to support the individuals with disabilities who rely on these services each day.



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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: MIKE POWERS		PHONE NUMBER: 417-849-8448	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: THE ARC OF THE OZARDS		TITLE: PRESIDENT	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE: MO	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:00 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 10		DATE: 2/24/2025	
COMMITTEE: Budget			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: NICOLE LYNCH		PHONE NUMBER: 636-699-2814	
REPRESENTING: VOYCE		TITLE: POLICY AND ADVOCACY DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 8050 WATSON RD SUITE 155			
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63119
EMAIL: nlynch@voycestl.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:21 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I urge you to include an additional \$2.425 million in the Fiscal Year 2026 budget to properly fund the Missouri Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. Missouri's Residents Receive the Lowest Number of Care Hours in the Nation Missouri ranks 52nd in the nation for staffing in nursing homes, with residents receiving just 3.24 hours of care per day- less than in any other state (including DC and Puerto Rico). With such low staffing, residents frequently go without timely assistance for basic needs like eating, bathing, and medical care. The Ombudsman Program serves as critical oversight, ensuring that when residents experience poor care, neglect, or rights violations, they have someone to turn to. Ombudsmen Prevent Costly Emergencies Beyond resolving complaints, ombudsmen catch problems before they escalate into medical emergencies that require ambulance rides or hospitalizations. For example, an ombudsman might spot the early signs of a bedsore, allowing staff to intervene before it leads to infection and hospitalization. Identifying untreated infections, malnutrition, or dehydration early can prevent unnecessary ER visits and save millions in Medicaid and healthcare costs. Severe Understaffing Puts Residents at Risk Federal guidelines recommend one ombudsman for every 2,000 licensed long-term care beds, but Missouri's ratios are as high as one ombudsman per 8,000 residents. This means:• Residents wait longer for complaints to be addressed. •

Family members struggle to get help. • Serious issues like medication errors and unsafe conditions go unreported. The requested \$2.425 million will allow Missouri to properly staff this vital program, ensuring that residents receive the advocacy and protection they deserve. Conclusion Missouri's long-term care residents deserve better. No resident should have to leave the state to receive the care and oversight that is standard elsewhere. By fully funding the Ombudsman Program, the state can improve resident safety, reduce preventable healthcare costs, and ensure every resident has a voice. I urge this committee to include \$2.425 million in the Fiscal Year 2026 budget to protect Missouri's most vulnerable residents. Thank you for your time and consideration.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 10		DATE: 2/24/2025	
COMMITTEE: Budget			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ROSS WALDEN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: rosswalden@rjdhealth.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:41 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am writing in support of a 1.7% COLA for Community Programs for people with developmental disabilities. Community Providers like RJD, Inc. want to increase our capacity and serve more people, but we cannot do that without the partnership of the Budget leaders in MO legislature. While DD Rates remain below market-level, we understand that the State Revenue picture does not allow for the critical investment into services that is truly necessary to stabilize services. A 1.7% COLA ensures that we can marginally keep up with rising costs in order to continue to support the individuals with disabilities who rely on these services each day.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 10		DATE: 2/24/2025	
COMMITTEE: Budget			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: VICENTE F. ESTRADA		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: vfemts@aol.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 11:37 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Right now, Missouri's long-term care residents face serious challenges- including staffing shortages, lapses in care, and difficulty resolving concerns. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program plays a crucial role in addressing these issues by providing independent advocacy, helping residents resolve complaints, and ensuring their voices are heard. However, this program is severely underfunded. Currently, Missouri's ombudsmen are carrying caseloads of up to 1 ombudsman for every 8,000 long-term care beds, making it difficult to provide the level of advocacy and support residents need. The federally recommended standard is 1 ombudsman per 2,000 long-term care beds. To meet this standard, Missouri needs an additional \$2.425 million in state funding.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Budget			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: WENDY D HAYS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: LOQW		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 254			
CITY: MONROE CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63456
EMAIL: whays@loqw.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:03 PM
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**Please support DMH providers in sustaining the capacity to provide services to people with disabilities.
The minimal rate increase will provide stability of Services in Mo.**



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Budget			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: ELLIE BLEDSOE		PHONE NUMBER:	
REPRESENTING: PLANNED PARENTHOOD GREAT RIVERS		TITLE: VICE PRESIDENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS	
ADDRESS: 4251 FOREST PARK AVE			
CITY: SAINT LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63118
EMAIL: ellie.bledsoe@ppgr.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:57 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Good afternoon Budget Committee members, My name is Ellie Bledsoe, and I am the interim Vice President of External Affairs for Planned Parenthood Great Rivers. I am here today to share my serious concerns about HB 10 and HB 11, and the attempts to strip funding for sexual and reproductive health care from tens of thousands of Missourians. In the more than 90 years that PPGR has been serving the people of the St. Louis region and Missouri Ozarks, we have delivered the highest standard of care to anyone seeking quality, compassionate sexual and reproductive care. Last year, PPGR served nearly 40,000 patients, including nearly 10,000 Missourians covered by Medicaid, providing them with STI testing, cancer screenings, birth control, and much more. Like any other health care provider, Planned Parenthood affiliates are reimbursed for services they provide to patients at health centers. RsMO 188.205 already prohibits state funding from paying for abortion services, so I think we should be clear about the real and catastrophic consequences of this legislation. Missouri is already one of the highest ranked states for the transmission of STI infections, and our maternal health outcomes remain some of the worst in the country. If our health centers are blocked from providing essential, life saving sexual and reproductive health care, the state's existing network of providers in the state could not handle the influx of new patients. Patients throughout the state would be forced to travel farther and wait longer to get care that simply cannot wait — especially rural and low-income Missourians. Everyone deserves access to expert clinicians who will provide the full range of evidence-based, high-quality sexual and reproductive health care — without shame or judgment. This is exactly what patients regardless of zip code, political affiliation, or ability to pay, have come to know and expect from Planned Parenthood's expert team of licensed providers and hardworking staff. However, the fake clinics that HB11 funds do not provide this; instead, they deceive, manipulate, and surveil people seeking actual health care. The state must stop funneling taxpayer dollars to these coercive, unregulated fake clinics and their marketing campaigns, especially when they do not provide the services Missourians actually need. Our state's health care system is already strained — and patients deserve to know that they can access care from licensed, trained physicians, not fake clinics with an agenda that doesn't include their health and well-being. At Planned Parenthood our top commitment is to ensure anybody can be informed about their own health and bodies, and to access sexual and reproductive health care that actually addresses their needs, no matter what. For the health and longevity of all Missourians, I hope that you share in this commitment as well. I am asking you to reject both HB's 10 and 11. Thank you. Ellie Bledsoe (she/her) VP of External Affairs, Interim



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COMMITTEE: Budget			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: ALAN D. DAVISON		PHONE NUMBER: 573-765-3348	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: WARREN NEIGHBOR CENTER RICHLAND		TITLE: DR	
ADDRESS: 20157 STATE ROAD A			
CITY: RICHLAND		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65556
EMAIL: alan.d.davison@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 7:10 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The Warren Neighborhood Center Board, like many of the other Centers under the AAA Aging Best, is in a constant battle with Aging Best to maintain a partnering relationship to serve our seniors. The Warren Neighborhood Center has worked the last six months to make changes to the Lease agreement with no success. The Lease includes a statement that says the Centers would pay Aging Best legal fees should Aging Best sue the Center. The Lease refers to a budget agreed to by both the Center and Aging Best. This does not happen, Aging Best simply imposes a budget on the Centers. This imposition of financial strain has already resulted in several small town Centers having to separate from Aging Best. Aging Best distributes their "Summary of Aging Best Programs and Services" listing over 50 programs and services. The only ones available to the Warren Neighborhood Center are the 3 or 4 related to nutrition. Our Center questions Aging Best ways and we have paid a price in having no Center Administrator for the last six months. Aging Best now has more bureaucrats working above the Centers than they have Centers. They clearly have forgotten who pays taxes and who they should serve.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: ANDREA ROWLAND		PHONE NUMBER: 660-265-4614	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: HIGH HOPE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, INC.		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 611 WEST THIRD STREET, STE 1			
CITY: MILAN		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63556
EMAIL: andrearowland@hhesinc.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:16 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Community Providers like High Hope Employment Services, Inc., are struggling to continue to keep quality staff for the individuals we serve. A 1.7% COLA is a start to allow us to continue to compete with other employers. We currently serve around 100 individuals in a much-underserved area. We currently provide services to individuals in Adair, Macon, Putnam, Schuyler and Sullivan County. If HHES was not able to continue providing services in North Central Missouri, it would cause a huge loss for those we serve in Putnam and Sullivan Counties, since we are the only provider willing to serve both counties.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C."HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: arniedienoff@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 11:59 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Are we cutting out all of the Government Waste, Fraud, Abuse and Duplication of Services and Programs? Are the Director Salaries Bonus of Huge Salaries Increases being cut beyond the Governor's Recommended Pay increase for State Employees? Sharpen the Pencils Budget Committee, Sharpen the Pencil! We NEED a Balanced Budget in every House Bill.



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COMMITTEE: Budget			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: BRITTANI GARDNER-EVANS		PHONE NUMBER: 573-207-2070	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: AVANT SUPPORTED LIVING		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 1805 W WORLEY STREET			
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65203
EMAIL: Brittani@avantsupportedliving.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 1:03 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I urge the Missouri legislature to approve a 1.7% COLA for DD Community Programs. Providers like Avant Supported Living are facing significant financial pressures due to rising operational costs and stagnant reimbursement rates. This directly impacts our ability to expand capacity and address the growing waitlists and inappropriate placements. While we recognize the state's fiscal limitations, this modest COLA is vital to ensuring we can continue to provide essential support to individuals with developmental disabilities. Without it, we risk further destabilizing an already strained service system.



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COMMITTEE: Budget			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: CHERYL CASSIDY		PHONE NUMBER: 417-655-6123	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: NOVA CENTER OF THE OZARKS, INC.		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 1311 E WOODHURST DRIVE			
CITY: SPRINGFIELD		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65804
EMAIL: ccassidy@teamncoto.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:15 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Hello, I am Cheryl Cassidy, Executive Director of Nova Center of the Ozarks, Inc. I am writing in support of a 1.7% COLA for DD Community Programs. In Missouri, we have hundreds of individuals with developmental disabilities stuck on a waitlist for services, along with hundreds more who are currently in inappropriate, unsafe, and costly settings of care. Community Providers like Nova Center of the Ozarks, Inc. want to increase our capacity and serve more people, but we cannot do that without the partnership of the Budget leaders in MO legislature. While DD Rates remain below market-level, we understand that the State Revenue picture does not allow for the critical investment into services that is truly necessary to stabilize services. A 1.7% COLA ensures that we can marginally keep up with rising costs in order to continue to support the individuals with disabilities who rely on these services each day.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: CINDY CLARK		PHONE NUMBER: 636-534-5231	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: EMMAUS HOMES		TITLE: PRESIDENT AND CEO	
ADDRESS: 3731 MUELLER ROAD			
CITY: ST. CHARLES		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63301
EMAIL: clarkc@emmaushomes.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 2:09 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Emmaus Homes serves adults with developmental disabilities in residential settings in 5 counties in eastern Missouri. We have been appreciative over the last several years of the significant investments made in our services, which are included in HB10.410. These investments have helped us raise wages and begin stabilizing the workforce, however, our turnover is still grater than 50% and about 60% of that turnover occurs in the first year of employment. Our rates remain approximately 20% below the rates recommended by Mercer in a rate study conducted by the state in 2022. While our wages are above minimum wage, we know that increases in the minimum wage over the last decade have created wage compression which impacts our ability to hire qualified candidates for this very important work. Less than 1% of the nearly 40,000 Missourians receiving services through the DMH/DD are served by state employees. The remaining are served by private providers. Missouri must continue to invest in these services to stabilize the workforce and address the real cost increases. Along with are partner agencies in Starling, we are requesting this a 1.7% increase to assist us in these efforts.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: DON LAFFERTY		PHONE NUMBER: 573-474-9446	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: IMPACT SUPPORT SERVICES		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 1605 CHAPEL HILL RD., STE B			
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65203
EMAIL: dlafferty@impactmissouri.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 2:15 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Impact Support Services has served individuals with disabilities in Boone County for 50 years. We currently support nearly 250 individuals, employ 240 staff, and provide approximately 27,000 hours of services each month. The Mercer study commissioned by DMH confirms that disability providers in Missouri are already underfunded. A 1.7% COLA is necessary just to help us keep up with rising costs and sustain essential services. Our direct support professionals (DSPs) are the backbone of care, yet low reimbursement rates make it difficult to offer competitive wages. Staffing shortages and high turnover directly impact the quality and consistency of care for individuals with disabilities. Approving this COLA is an investment in sustaining services and the workforce that provides them. Thank you for your time and consideration.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: EMILY MORGAN		PHONE NUMBER: 319-321-0042	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: LIFE UNLIMITED		TITLE: VP OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS	
ADDRESS: 320 ARMOUR RD			
CITY: NORTH KANSAS CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 64116
EMAIL: emorgan@luinc.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:09 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Dear Members of the Missouri House Budget Committee, On behalf of Life Unlimited, which serves 1,000 individuals with disabilities across 12 counties in the Kansas City metro and Northwest Missouri, I am submitting testimony in support of the 1.7% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase for community-based providers. This modest increase is essential to helping providers keep pace with inflation, sustain the direct care workforce, and ensure continued high-quality services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Without this adjustment, rising costs effectively act as a cut to services, making it even harder to recruit and retain staff. Currently, Missouri's reimbursement rates only allow for an average wage of \$17/hour for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), far below market levels. Meanwhile, 579 individuals remain on the waitlist for in-home support and 106 for residential support. Without action, we risk further service shortages that could leave even more people without the essential care they need. A 1.7% COLA – representing \$16 million in General Revenue – is a necessary step to prevent providers from falling further behind and to help ensure individuals with disabilities receive the support they deserve. I urge you to approve this increase to protect community-based IDD services and those who rely on them. Thank you for your time and consideration.



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COMMITTEE: Budget			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: GREG KRAMER		PHONE NUMBER: 314-853-4473	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: EASTERSEALS MIDWEST		TITLE: VP OF ADVOCACY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS	
ADDRESS: 11933 WESTLINE INDUSTRIAL DR.			
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63146
EMAIL: Greg.kramer@esmw.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 1:10 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Easterseals Midwest supports over 14,000 Missouri Citizens with Disabilities and employs over 1,500 people. Our ask is very straight forward. We are requesting a 1.7% Cost of Living Allocation which equates to a new appropriation of \$16 Million in General Revenue funds. Additionally, we are requesting an additional appropriation to support the 5 statewide Autism Projects all of which have not received any new funding for over a decade. Both items if not addressed annually places our industry even further behind the market place and creates the ever growing wait list problem. We recognize the financial position our state is in but we also want the Legislature to understand the priority of our situation. People with disabilities require varying supports from birth to death. With these services and supports Easterseals Midwest can help people with Disabilities become contributing members of their communities.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: JESSICA FRAHM		PHONE NUMBER: 573-861-2273	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: HEARTLAND INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 1010 HWY 28 W			
CITY: OWENSVILLE		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65066
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:00 AM	

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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: JUSTIN LORENZ		PHONE NUMBER: 314-395-5851	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: L'arche ST. LOUIS, INC.		TITLE: OPERATIONS MANAGER	
ADDRESS: 9445 LITZSINGER RD.			
CITY: BRENTWOOD		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63144
EMAIL: justinlorenz@larchestlouis.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 1:18 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am writing in support of a 1.7% COLA for DD Community Providers, which would allow L'Arche St. Louis, a nonprofit organization, to hire and keep the people we need to start serving more people as they come off the waitlist in Missouri. Current reimbursement rates in Missouri only reimburse for a wage of \$17/hour, but we fundraise to provide 18% more than that in our starting worker wages so that we can find and better retain our workforce with what is closer to a living wage. Additionally, any budget year without a COLA increase means a cut in services or quality on our end, since there is consistent inflation in our economy. We absolutely need your support to ensure more people are getting necessary and safe supports to lead dignified lives, and avoiding inappropriate and ultimately costlier settings of care.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: LAURA CRAVENS		PHONE NUMBER: 573-874-1995	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: BOONE COUNTY FAMILY RESOURCES		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 2700 W ASH STREET			
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65203
EMAIL: lcravens@bcfr.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 1:34 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am writing in support of an increase in the Targeted Case Management (TCM) rate for those of us serving people with Developmental Disabilities (DD) and in support of a 1.7% COLA for DD Community Programs, such as residential services. In Missouri, we are going on our 9th or 10th year with the same TCM rate. In addition, we have hundreds of individuals with DD languishing on a waitlist for services, along with hundreds more who are currently in inappropriate, unsafe, and costly settings of care. TCM and Service Providers, such as Boone County Family Resources, want to increase our capacity and serve more people, but we cannot do that without the partnership of the Budget leaders in MO legislature. While DD Rates remain below market-level, we understand that the State Revenue picture does not allow for the critical investment into services that is truly necessary to stabilize services. A 1.7% COLA ensures that we can marginally keep up with rising costs in order to continue to support the individuals with disabilities who rely on these services each day. **THANK YOU** for your time.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Budget			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: LISA GOOLSBY		PHONE NUMBER: 314-414-0226	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: JUDEVINE CENTER FOR AUTISM		TITLE: VICE PRESIDENT OF PROGRAMS	
ADDRESS: 1810 CRAIG ROAD			
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63146
EMAIL: lgoolsby@judevine.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:35 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

As a Community Provider, Judevine Center for Autism is writing in support of a 1.7% COLA for DD Community Programs. In Missouri, we have hundreds of individuals with developmental disabilities stuck on a waitlist for services, along with hundreds more who are currently being inappropriately served. Community Providers like us would like to increase our capacity to serve more people, but we cannot do that without the partnership of the Budget leaders in MO legislature. While DD Rates remain below market-level, we understand that the State Revenue picture does not allow for the critical investment into services that is truly necessary to stabilize services. A 1.7% COLA ensures that we can marginally keep up with rising costs in order to continue to support the individuals with disabilities who rely on these services each day.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 10		DATE: 2/24/2025	
COMMITTEE: Budget			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: MARK A. KEELEY		PHONE NUMBER: 314-817-2280	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: ST. LOUIS ARC		TITLE: PRESIDENT/CEO	
ADDRESS: 1177 N. WARSON ROAD			
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63132
EMAIL: mkeeley@slarc.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 1:37 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am writing in support of a 1.7% COLA for DD Community Programs. The St. Louis Arc provides services and supports to over 4,500 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the greater St. Louis metropolitan area. For 75 years, we have provided high quality supports to ensure the inclusion of all people with disabilities in their communities. We can only ensure quality when we are able to recruit and retain high quality staff members. A 1.7% COLA, while still short of what is needed, will ensure we can marginally keep up with rising costs to the people we support. We seek to expand our services going forward and can only do so if we can recruit and retain great staff members. Thank you for your consideration and support of this request.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 10		DATE: 2/24/2025	
COMMITTEE: Budget			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: NANCY PENNINGTON		PHONE NUMBER: 816-396-8819	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO	
ADDRESS:			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL: nancy@macdds.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:09 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Missourians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) rely on the Department of Mental Health-Division of Developmental Disabilities (DMH-DD) for crucial supports to live as independently as possible in their communities. While some of these supports are provided by DMH-DD staff, the majority are provided by contracted providers through Targeted Case Management and Medicaid Waivers. Missouri's waiver system is based on a crisis model, meaning the service is necessary and people are prioritized by need. Hundreds of people identified as "in crisis" are currently stuck on a "waitlist" and unable to access essential services such as adaptive and specialized medical equipment, therapies, and residential programs. This waitlist jeopardizes people's health and safety. Governor Kehoe has recommended funding both in the supplemental budget and here in HB10 to provide funding for these services and "eliminate the waitlist". We respectfully request that this funding remain in the budget. Targeted Case Managers (Support Coordinators) are the crucial link between people in need and the service delivery system. They play a vital role in Missouri's budget, ensuring the most efficient and effective use of tax dollars linking over 43,000 Missourians to their essential service providers. Yet, TCM services have not had a rate increase since 2015, creating staff shortages and high staff turnover jeopardizing service delivery. To fully fund TCM services to market rate would require \$6.4M. At a minimum, we are requesting funding to provide a COLA for TCM agencies similar to that received by state employees doing the same job over the last 15 years since the last rate increase. Direct Support Professionals are the backbone of our service system requiring a competitive wage as well. Wages for direct support employees have fallen behind other sectors, and it will only get worse with the compression created by Missouri's minimum wage increases. It is an extremely demanding job requiring the provision of medical, behavioral, therapeutic, and teaching strategies. The acceptable candidate pool can currently earn more elsewhere with fewer responsibilities. We are requesting at minimum a COLA for these services as well. All of these items can be found in the DMH-DD Division Budget within HB 10, Sec. 10.410. Please reach out if you have questions or require additional information. Respectfully submitted by the Missouri Association of County Developmental Disabilities Services (MACDDS) on behalf of our 94 members: 65 county SB40 boards and 29 other disability service providers.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: NATHAN HARTER		PHONE NUMBER: 417-861-8375	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: K AND C STEPPING STONES		TITLE: CEO	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 9332			
CITY: SPRINGFIELD		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65801
EMAIL: nathan@kcsteppingstones.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 2:01 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am writing in support of a 1.7% COLA for DD Community Programs. In Missouri, we have hundreds of individuals with developmental disabilities on a waitlist for services, along with hundreds more who are currently in inappropriate, unsafe, and costly settings of care. Community Providers like K and C Stepping Stones want to increase our capacity and serve more people, but we cannot do that without the partnership of the Budget leaders in MO legislature. While DD Rates remain below market-level, we understand that the State Revenue picture does not allow for the critical investment into services that is truly necessary to stabilize services. A 1.7% COLA ensures that we can marginally keep up with rising costs in order to continue to support the individuals with disabilities who rely on these services each day.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: OPAL M. JONES		PHONE NUMBER: 314-328-2701	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: DOORWAYS		TITLE: PRESIDENT & CEO	
ADDRESS: 1101 N. JEFFERSON AVE.			
CITY: SAINT LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63106
EMAIL: ojones@doorwayshousing.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 9:06 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Distinguished Members of the House of Representatives Budget Committee, Please allow me to introduce myself as the President and CEO of DOORWAYS. We are an interfaith nonprofit organization dedicated to providing housing and healthcare services to our most vulnerable citizens – those battling HIV, homelessness, mental illness and more, due to a lifetime of marginalization and limited opportunities. DOORWAYS serves 62 counties in Missouri, bringing critical services to areas where there is unmet need for those low-income and living with HIV. Those services include housing, whether it be one of our apartment buildings, or rental and utility subsidies for people to remain in their own accommodations, in their own neighborhoods. One of our housing programs, Cooper House, is a 36-bed assisted living facility serving the sickest people living with AIDS in our region, accepting clients from across the state, who would otherwise be destitute or deteriorating alone without the program. We also provide empowerment services that stabilize people and help them reach higher levels of independence. This includes behavioral health therapies to address mental illness and substance abuse, as well as career services that advance skills and employment opportunities. What I've described is just the tip of the iceberg. Below the surface is the heart of the agency, which provides love, encouragement and support with a can-do attitude to foster hope within our clients. Many of whom have been written off or cast aside. With this approach, and evidence-based philosophies and services, we have saved lives and demonstrated meaningful outcomes, such as 90% viral suppression in many of our programs among participants. Those who achieve viral suppression are healthy AND they do not transmit HIV to other individuals. Yes, we are stopping the forward transmission of HIV, which means a \$500,000 savings to the State of Missouri for each infection prevented. Saving lives costs money for the more than 3,000 people we serve annually. We hope that once again funds will be appropriated to our cause. Specifically, we request: • \$750,000 in HB 10 from General Revenue for programming and general operations DOORWAYS has always enjoyed bipartisan support for our programs. While we were grateful to have \$500K placed in last year's budget, we were also dismayed to see Governor Parson veto that funding, resulting in a reduction in staffing and fewer mental health services to our program participants. We have every hope that the course will be corrected in this year's budget and our funding restored. As always, we appreciate the support provided by the State of Missouri, which has been a long-time partner in aiding our mission. I thank you ever so greatly for your thoughtful consideration. Opal M. Jones President & CEO DOORWAYS



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: REBECCA NOWLIN		PHONE NUMBER: 573-476-5578	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MO ASSOCIATION OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING		TITLE: BOARD MEMBER	
ADDRESS: 2027 CHRISTY DRIVE			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:00 AM	

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: RENEE SELF		PHONE NUMBER: 816-216-7750	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: THE COMMUNITY SUPPORTS NETWORK, INC.		TITLE: AREA DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 1215 SWIFT STREET			
CITY: NORTH KANSAS CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 64116
EMAIL: rself@thecsnetwork.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:55 PM	

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am writing in support of a 1.7% COLA for DD Community Programs. In Missouri, we have hundreds of individuals with developmental disabilities stuck on a waitlist for services, along with hundreds more who are currently in inappropriate, unsafe, and costly settings of care. Community Providers like The Community Supports Network, Inc. want to increase our capacity and serve more people, but we cannot do that without the partnership of the Budget leaders in MO legislature. While DD Rates remain below market-level, we understand that the State Revenue picture does not allow for the critical investment into services that is truly necessary to stabilize services. A 1.7% COLA ensures that we can marginally keep up with rising costs in order to continue to support the individuals with disabilities who rely on these services each day.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: RHETT BOWLIN		PHONE NUMBER: 907-230-8728	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: SPECIALIZED SUPPORT SERVICES, INC.		TITLE: CEO	
ADDRESS: 2415 N WOODBINE ROAD			
CITY: SAINT JOSEPH		STATE: MO	ZIP: 64506
EMAIL: rhettbowlin@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 12:56 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am writing in support of a 1.7% COLA for Division of Developmental Disabilities (DD) Community Programs. Community Providers like Specialized Support Services, Inc. want to better support the individuals we serve currently AND increase our capacity and serve more people, but we cannot do that without the partnership of the budget leaders in the Missouri legislature. While DD rates remain below market level, we understand that the state revenue picture does not allow for the critical investment into services that is truly necessary to stabilize services. A 1.7% COLA, however, ensures that we can marginally keep up with rising costs in order to continue to support the individuals with disabilities who rely on these services each day.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ROBERT PIEPER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: RFPieper@outlook.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/23/2025 2:34 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

This is to urge your support for \$2.425 million in the Missouri Fiscal Year 2026 budget to properly fund the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MoDHSS) Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. With both Missouri's older adult population and incidences of serious, headline-generating nursing home problems rapidly increasing, the innovative and effective Ombudsman has become a critical line of defense for both long-term care (LTC) residents -- and facilities. When adequately funded, the Ombudsman program makes regular visits to long-term care (LTC) facilities to assist residents with any issues they may encounter at the facility. In that capacity, the Ombudsman program provides a critical early warning system for the type of truly serious problems that led to the abrupt 2023 closure of the Northview Village Nursing Home, the state's largest, or the proliferation of substandard nursing facilities investigated by a special St. Louis Aldermanic Task Force. Moreover, because Ombudsmen help LTC residents to resolve many non-life-threatening issues on their own in cooperation with facility staff; the program helps to limit the number of formal complaints filed with MoDHSS each year for investigation and thereby reduce the backlog of cases the department is currently struggling to handle. The MoDHSS is currently providing Ombudsman visits at far below the rate recommended by the National Institute of Medicine. Currently, Missouri's Ombudsmen are carrying caseloads of up to 1 Ombudsman for every 8,000 long-term care beds. The IOM recommends 1 Ombudsman per 2,000 long-term care beds. I hope you will consider the importance of adequate funding for the Ombudsman program, as the Missouri House works on the state's 2026 budget.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: TERRI FALIS-COCHRAN		PHONE NUMBER: 417-680-3864	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY RESOURCE BOARD OF JASPER COUNTY		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 1727 W 26TH ST			
CITY: JOPLIN		STATE: MO	ZIP: 64804
EMAIL: tfalis-cochran@ccmjc.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 2:27 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am the Executive Director of Developmental Disability Resource Board of Jasper County and we help link individuals with developmental disabilities to critical services and supports. I am respectfully requesting support of a 1.7% COLA for DD Community Programs. A 1.7% COLA would help our agency be able to pay a competitive wage to our Support Coordinators in an effort to increase capacity and serve more people. Thank you for your consideration!



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: TERRY COMBS		PHONE NUMBER: 660-620-4973	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: CENTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES, INC.		TITLE: CHIEF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER	
ADDRESS: 1500 EWING DRIVE			
CITY: SEDALIA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65301
EMAIL: tcombs@chs-mo.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2025 1:06 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am asking for consideration of an increase in reimbursement for contract providers who are delivering services to people in supports. We are already behind comparable positions in state ran facilities and at currently reimbursed rate of \$17/hour, behind the rate of \$21/hour that the Mercer (actuarial based) rate study identified that we should be paid on average to be competitive in the marketplace. With that being said, we are aware of the on-going concerns with revenue not meeting expectations and therefore are asking for a marginal 1.7% increase to at least help with (not fully address) inflationary costs. The 1.7% increase would cost 16 million in General Revenue. As a community provider, we want to increase our capacity to serve people.As a system, we continue to be challenged with a workforce shortage, a growing waitlist, and reimbursement rates that are below market-level. This situation is only exacerbated in years when we receive no increase at all. Please consider doing what you can to support a rate increase to support these much-needed services.Center for Human Services (CHS) is a Non-Profit organization established in 1955 in Sedalia, MO. Today, CHS supports people with disabilities from birth through end of life through Early Head Start, Head Start, First Steps, Targeted Case Management, Community Living, Day Program, Employment, Residential, Aquatics, and Housing programs in over 50 counties in Missouri.