



EXHIBIT 24  
DATE 2-18-05  
HB 682

February 16, 2005

House Human Services Committee

RE: HB 682

It is my understanding that should HB 682 pass, that I will need to be licensed in order to keep my present position. However, in order to meet that requirement, I would have to go to school for at least 4 years in order to earn the necessary college degree. I would like to take this opportunity to share my experience after working as a Social Services Designee for the past 26 years.

Over the years, I have made at least five attempts to find a degreed social worker to work with me as a consultant and help better serve the residents in our facility. However, finding someone interested or available was not an easy task. One felt he did not have the experience that I had, and had thought I would actually be a referral source for him due to my experience on the job as well as the countless workshop and classes I have attended since working as a SSD. Several other attempts have been made to find a licensed or degreed social worker, but there is a tremendous shortage in this field which has resulted in networking of other facility social workers to accomplish the goal of meeting the needs of our residents in long term care facilities.

Over these 26 years, I have worked with many SSD's from other nursing homes and they, like myself, may not have had a degree, but were working hard at meeting the needs of nursing home residents and family members. I, personally, have attended various workshops and try to learn all I can about my job by sitting next to degreed people who are also there to learn. Indiana University offered a course, "Social Service in a Health Care Facility" and I completed that course on 01/27/1989. Any opportunity to attend workshops or listen to speakers on topics dealing with nursing home residents I have taken seriously in an attempt to meet the needs of our residents.

For those of us who have been willing to work and learn about social work in nursing homes, I want to say to you, please, look at who we are and what we have accomplished instead of looking at degrees and replace us. It goes without saying that many of my colleagues, as well as myself will be faced with being unemployed in a State already faced with employment issues with no near future resolution.

*Mary Hultgren.*

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