EXHIBIT 11
DATE Jan. 14, 2005
HB

Jan. 13, 05

Dear ~~Mr.~~ Madam Chairman, members of the committee

I am writing you this letter of concern regarding Independent Living, Transportation and Medicaid. These issues are of great interest to me as I have a disability, am a beneficiary of these services.

Independant Living Centers are most important. Without these centers we won't have transportation or places for the disabled to live or advocate services.

1/3 to 1/2 of the work of the Independant Living Centers in Montana is funded by the General Fund. Our concern is that it be maintained and not cut in the upcoming session. We are seeking the continued biennium funding $457,532 And we want it put in the Governor's Budget.

Independant Living Centers: transportation, advocating for services, discharge planning for those in nursing homes or out of institutions, hospitals.

Transportation is another big concern. Too many people with disabilities are excluded from their communities due to a lack of accessible, affordable transportation. Many communities, people with disabilities can't access health care, employment, Sunday church or basic services such as grocery stores, evening entertainment or even education. Montana is a rural state. We need ~~to~~ support for coordination and sharing of existing services such as buses and expansion of transportation services.

Independant Living Centers also implement the ADA at the local level by educating people about expectations and needs for improvement. The population of individuals with disabilities is increasing. 17% of Montana's population 140,732 over the age of 5 have a disability. Loss of funding will increase the cost

(OVER)

of care and we want to avoid that.
No other agencies provide these services.
Without these services more people will be institutionalized, unemployed and without help.
At this time 35 counties are in jeopardy.
We belong back in the governor's budget.
Enough of these budget deficits. Over half of the state no longer receiving services.
In the 2005 legislative session, I ask as your constituent that you vote to restore Independant Living Funding, Support Increased Accessability to Public Transportation weekends and week nights and better to Medicaid Services.
Your support is crucial!

Thank You!

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