

EXHIBIT 8
DATE Jan 17 2005
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Chairperson and committee members,

My name is Kenneth Carlson from Great Falls.

I work for Easterseals-Goodwill store as an Extended Employee and I do enjoy the opportunity to work with my hands with dignity around people of this area. This program helps me pay a part of our living expenses at home with our families as well as help lower the overhead cost for the non-profit Business of the Goodwill store so they can help train people for jobs. This program helps some of the Extended Employees to start back into the full work force and all of us to live with dignity even if they are terminally ill as is one of my co-workers. On last Thanksgiving Friday, he was scheduled to work but the bus that brings him to work did not run, so he had to find a person to bring him to work and pick him up after work, instead of taking a four day weekend. That is how important it is for us in the Extended Employee Program to be around those how care about us and be able to do something for the good of others no matter how few hours we can work.

I have a College education but due to a fourteen foot fall while cleaning snow from the roof of my home in December of 1996 because the snow was deep enough to cover the sewer vent pipes which would have sent toxic fumes in to the house that could have harmed my family. there was a thin layer of ice under the snow that sent me off the roof head first, I now have a Traumatic brain injury, the part of my brain that stored the College education was erased. I have very little short term memory. A brain injury is as unique as snow flacks falling outside no two are the same. I had a M.R.I. taken two years after the fall and it showed a picture of what looked like a can of worms in a ball, but there were long sections of brain that were black. Also know as the tunnel of death. This was explained by my Doctor, that do to injury that parts of my brain are dead never to be replaced and what was stored in that area would have to be relearned and if any vital areas such as speech, vision or hearing, would be gone for ever. In a job after my brain injury, when ever I need to find something by

numbers, I found my brain would turn the numbers around and I could not find the

item I was seeking. The chances for me to work a normal job is very slim according to the Montana State Job Service. To me this extended employee program gives me the opportunity to be useful at work and gives pride to my family members knowing that I am working not relying on them to pay for my personal needs. At least those of us with disabilities, disadvantages and other needs can work to maximize our independence under the Extended Employee program.

There are many other people that want to work and this program is the only one that is being used for those with disabilities, and with out the funding there will be less tax payers and more on welfare. At one time people like Dr. Jack Kavorken (sp) would be able to find clients, now , with the extended employee program we don't need to live under the believes of the old countries beliefs that those that were worthless, ether livestock or humans were expected to go off and die and those that were strong and useful, survive. This Extended Employee program has helped me experience four years of success, satisfaction and frustration at learning new things, and working with a verity of people.

Thank you for listening to my testimony.

Kenneth N. Carlson 766 32 Avenue North East Great Falls, Mt 59404

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EASTER SEALS-GOODWILL NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN

WHO WE ARE: Easter Seals-Goodwill is a non-profit corporation that has provided community-based services and supports to people with special needs since 1946 in Montana and 1954 in Great Falls specifically. Our major sources of funding for people with developmental disabilities are received from the Montana Developmental Disabilities Program and Montana Vocational Rehabilitation (each part of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services), and some grants. Other programs are funded by the Office of Public Assistance, Medicaid and Medicare as well as private pay and grants.

OUR MISSION: Our mission is to maximize the independence of those individuals with disabilities, disadvantages and other special needs.

WHERE WE ARE: Our agency provides services for people with developmental disabilities in Great Falls. A variety of services are provided in other counties including Pondera, Teton, Toole, Chouteau, Glacier, Hill, Big Horn and Butte-Silver Bow.

TYPES OF PROGRAMS OFFERED: In Montana alone Easter Seals-Goodwill's trained staff provided a broad spectrum of individualized services to over 7,000 people last year. In addition to services for people with developmental disabilities in Great Falls, we provide employment services to people with all disabilities in our Workforce Development programs and to those in our WoRCing Partners program operating in six counties: Cascade, Chouteau, Pondera, Teton, Toole and Big Horn. Each program is a major contributor to the economy in each of those areas. Our Medicaid Waiver Case Management Teams serve elderly and physically disabled individuals in 9 counties and home care, home health and private duty nursing in Cascade, Teton, Pondera and Toole Counties. Additionally, we provide childcare services for children with and without disabilities in Great Falls and Missoula and adult day services in Great Falls.

EMPLOYEES: Easter Seals-Goodwill employs 200 staff in Great Falls and 355 in 19 different programs located across the state. Of those employees, 92% provide direct training and supervisory services to people with disabilities.

SALARY AND BENEFITS: Employees of Easter Seals-Goodwill earned a total of \$2,559,975 in salaries and benefits last year and provided major contributions to the Montana tax base, including property, income and unemployment taxes. Last year 203 people supported by Easter Seals-Goodwill earned \$259,146 at jobs in our facilities and 441 found jobs in the community with a potential earning power of over 4 million dollars.

MONTANA SUPPLIERS: Last year Easter Seals-Goodwill purchased \$666,428 worth of goods and services from businesses in Montana. Our corporation plays an active role in purchasing services from local community vendors, such as grocery, maintenance and office supplies.

TOP EMPLOYERS: With 200 employees in Great Falls, Easter Seals-Goodwill is the 14th largest employer. In Montana we have 355 FTE's (Full Time Equivalents).