EXHIBIT 2
DATE Thurs Jan 27 2005

TESTIMONY FOR THE HUMAN SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE HEARING
JAN. 27, 2005 HEARING ROOM 472

Madame Chair and members of the committee, for the record my name is Nancy Marks. I am a rancher from Townsend. In the year 2000 my husband and I began fostering a sibling group of three children who had been in care since 1997. We fostered them for 18 months during which time the oldest child disrupted from our home. We began extensive personal, family and group therapy in 2001, when we adopted the remaining two children.

It turns out both of our children are reactive attachment, severely emotionally disturbed little ones, now ages 10 and 12, who had been sexually and physically abused, but much worse, they both had been severely neglected. With 100,000 miles on my car put on between Townsend and Helena since the year 2000, we have been able to pull the girl through. We have used attachment therapy and school therapy. We make full use of mentoring programs and keep her busy in 4-H and on the ranch. But her problems still plague her: she hoards food when she is alone for more than a half hour, she starts fires when she gets jealous of her time with either her dad or me. She has flashbacks about her abuse, and terrible dreams at night.

Our son, on the other hand, has never adjusted to family life yet. He is belligerent, violent, and abusive to himself because it is the only way of life he is comfortable with. He feels most in control when he has his Dad and I out of control. When we learned how to deal with his behaviors through therapy and countless trainings through AWARE, Intermountain Children's Home, Adopt US Kids, and all the conferences on the human brain sponsored by these agencies, he then turned on himself. He pulled his fingernails out by the roots, picked himself until he had huge open sores. We replaced wallboard from the holes in the walls in made and redid furniture he broke up. When he finally began beating on his sister and me, the family resorted to help from Shodair Hospital so we could be safe. He now is a student at Intermountain Children's Home getting the best therapeutic help Montana has to offer.

We knew when we took on adoption that it would not be easy: we had been fully informed in our KCS trainings with the Dept. of Family Services. But we did not expect to give up our entire way of life to accommodate these children's behaviors. Had we not had information on, and access to AWARE, Intermountain, Family therapy, Psychological and neurological testing, we could not have learned how to deal with our children's problems. The services have been indispensable. They must be kept available to us as we enter teenage with these children, and to help others and us from falling apart.

I know how expensive these services are because I volunteer as a member on the Family Services State Advisory Council as well as on the Regional Advisory Council. I also am active in the Mt. Foster/Adoptive Parents Association, and I work hard at helping

With recruiting new families and building support groups for families parenting these children. I also work as a trainer with the Dept. of Family Services as a co-trainer for the Keeping Children Safe Classes. I try to give back.

Please consider, committee members, that there are countless Montana families who have taken on this arduous task of parenting these damaged children, by some count, approximately 10, 000 children of birth parents who are drug addicted and already in the care of the state. Please help us keep these children out of our prisons by providing services to help them heal as much as they are able from their abuse and neglect, to lead useful and productive lives.

Thank you.

Nancy Marks
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