

Madam Chair and Members of the
Committee,

My name is Marchelle and I currently live in Missoula. When I was 49 years old I was a victim of an assault. I was shot on the left side of my head resulting in a traumatic brain injury. This action changed my life forever. I went from a working single mother to being in a coma, spending three months in the hospital and having to learn to do even the basic of tasks like walking and talking again. My son went to live with my mother for the last two years of his childhood. When I left the hospital I resided in a group home where activities were very limited to inside the facility.

In March of 2003 I moved to a supported living facility, supported by Opportunity Resources. Since that time I have started working in the production area at opportunity. I have joined the YMCA and staff supports me in transportation. I am looking on increasing my number of strikes

at bowling. I am working on maintaining all aspects of my apartment with out staff assistance. I continue to work on my memory knowing it will take some time. My newest goal is to obtain and manage my own finances. Staff assists me with appropriate meal planning and grocery shopping.

Opportunity has promoted my independence. There are opportunities for me to participate in things I would like to do. Recently I was able to independently attend a social supper and go bowling with some of the individuals from opportunity. Opportunity is a good program. It provides me with work and ultimately could assist me living as independently as possible and gain employment in the community. It is important to me that providers get a rate increase so they can continue to provide me with the assistance I need to achieve all my goals and to be as independent as I can.
Thank You!