

EXHIBIT

DATE

HE

43
Fri Feb 4 2005

I am George Olk a former long-haul truck driver, owner-operator of twenty-eight years. I am 51 years old. I became disabled by strokes and brain injury in 2000 and 2001. I am no longer able to drive or work gainfully, making it necessary to require assistance from the state for everyday needs. My wife is also disabled. When I was working I made about 85,000 dollars a year with operating expenses about 45,000 thousand. I was doing pretty good. Now, after my Medicaid spend down I make \$525 a month. I don't expect to ever make \$45,000 a year again, but things could be better. I had a heart attack in 1998 and couldn't work for four months. Because of my strokes I'm blind in my left eye and partially in my right eye. Home and Community Based Services has provided very valuable help in the last 4 years. Specifically:

- 1) Bridges – provided education training and support on living with a brain injury.
- 2) Opportunity Resources – provides some work, education and structure – valuable in helping regain some dexterity and physical ability as well as the hope of regaining some pride in being able to work again.
- 3) PCA's – provide home cooked meals – doubly important since I am diabetic and my wife's disability frequently prevents her ability to cook. Also provide transportation and assistance for working out, therapy and doctor's appointments when my wife can't.

I don't think it's fair that I live on less money than some people who never worked. I should get at least the same.

My question is this: Is it fair that I live on \$525 because of my spend down and other people don't have a spend down and get \$579? Please raise the medically ready cap from \$525 to the SSI level of \$579.