

Madam Chair, Members of the Committee – for the record, my name is Marlene Disburg.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to present today – in particular I want to thank Representative Windy Boy for sponsoring and supporting this legislation.

I have served as a facilitator for the Montana Youth Leadership Forum for four years – beginning in 2000 – when the first forum was held. If we had time, several of us could tell you stories that would make you laugh and many that would make you cry. What a week.

As facilitators we were there to help the youth see their potential – not their disability, provide them some tools to advocate for themselves in a world that doesn't always understand disabilities, and have the strength and fortitude to participate in a “pull yourself up by your boot straps society.”

I believe in personal responsibility and natural consequences of our choices – I also believe it is our responsibility to give youth the tools and supports they need to make good choices – MYLF is one of those tools that really works.

Please take time to review the curriculum and talk to others who have participated – facilitators and youth – MYLF yields outcomes – tangible outcomes like a life plan and those other outcomes that you can see but can't touch – like confidence, self-worth, strength, hope....

Thank you again for listening.

LEGISLATIVE FINANCE AND CLERK
COMMITTEE NO. 2
DATE 3-21-15
FILE NO. HB550