

EXHIBIT 37
DATE 1-18-07
HB 2

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 that are not competitively employable without extended help, look 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 was one of my past co-worker. Other members that were able to move out of a group home and live functional independently and knowing that their medical condition could put them back in the group home some time in the future. If anyone wants to work with in his / her physical and mental residual functional capacity 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 having competitive employment is very slim according to the Montana State Job Service and the Social Security Administration. 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. This Extended Employee program has helped me experience success, satisfaction and frustration at learning new things, learn to work with cognitive limitations, and working with a verity of people.

Thank you for listening to my testimony.

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