

William & Debra Mahoney
4517 62 Ave SW
Great Falls, MT 59404

EXHIBIT 40
DATE 1-18-07
HB 2

Dear Chairwoman,

We are the parents of a 27 year old young man with a mental disability. He has severe anxiety and needs a lot of emotional support. While he was in special education classes in school, he had part-time jobs within the school system, and did well at these jobs with the help of his teachers and fellow students.

After he was out of school, through Easter Seals and Vocational Rehabilitation he had a training job and a job coach with Hastings in Great Falls. When the time had run out on the training, he was not hired because he couldn't run the cash register. How disappointed he was because he really loved that job.

Our son suffered a setback in the spring of 2001 after his grandfather died and was ill until October of that year. He began going to the Mental Health Center in Great Falls, there he was encouraged to try another service organization in town. He signed up with them, with the understanding that they would work to find him a job, and help coach him in that job. After a year with nothing being done, he left that organization and went back to Easter Seals Goodwill.

We were told about a program through Easter Seals called Extended Employment. This seemed to be the answer to our prayers. The only problem – because of not enough funding for this program there was quite a waiting list.

Our son had to wait several years on that list. He had to wait until someone left the job, or there was more money for the program. This was hard on him; he just could not understand why he couldn't go to work. Many times he told us how much he wanted to work but he was losing hope of that ever happening. Yes, he needs a lot of emotional support, but, with help he is very productive.

Throughout the years, our son has suffered so many setbacks, that when the Easter Seals worker came to offer him a job, we were sure she was coming to deliver bad news. What a joyful surprise to find out it was to offer him a job.

There have been some amazing changes in our son. He is now living in his own apartment and has a great job that he loves! Everyday he gains more independence and self-confidence. Most important of all – he his happy because he has a reason to get up every morning. He is productive, he has a job.

We are very thankful for the Extended Employment Program.

William & Debra Mahoney