



# Easter Seals-Goodwill Northern Rocky Mountain, Inc.

*We create solutions that change lives for people with disabilities,  
for the disadvantaged and for their families.*

EXHIBIT 8  
DATE 1/22/09  
NO 2

- Adult Day Services**  
Great Falls, MT
- Autism Services**  
Billings, MT  
Boise, ID  
Salt Lake City, UT
- Career Designs**  
Great Falls, MT
- Case Management Services**  
Great Falls, MT  
Nampa, ID  
Sheridan, WY
- Child Development Center**  
Missoula, MT
- Community Access**  
Great Falls, MT  
Sheridan, WY
- Equipment Loan Program**  
Billings, MT  
Boise, ID  
Great Falls, MT  
Helena, MT
- Goodwill Staffing Services**  
Boise, ID  
Nampa, ID
- Goodwill Stores**  
Billings, MT  
Boise, ID  
Butte, MT  
Great Falls, MT  
Helena, MT  
Meridian, ID  
Missoula, MT  
Nampa, ID  
Pocatello, ID
- Highlands Hospice**  
Butte, MT  
Deer Lodge, MT
- Home Care Services**  
Butte, MT  
Conrad, MT  
Great Falls, MT
- Medallion Medical Care**  
Great Falls, MT
- OutSources Unlimited**  
Great Falls, MT
- The MailRoom**  
Great Falls, MT
- Pediatric Therapy Services**  
Billings, MT
- Regional Service Center**  
Great Falls, MT
- Supported Living**  
Great Falls, MT  
Sheridan, WY
- Supported Employment**  
Great Falls, MT  
Sheridan, WY
- WorkForce Development Ctr.**  
Great Falls, MT
- WorkForce Re-entry Services**  
Southern & Eastern Idaho
- Working Solutions**  
Nampa, ID

Good Morning Madam Chair and Members of the Committee.

For the record my name is Michelle Belknap. I reside in Great Falls and I am the President/CEO of Easter Seals-Goodwill Northern Rocky Mountain, Inc.

I am here today to explain why I support the rate increase recommended by the state consultant for agencies providing services to individuals with developmental disabilities. As you know, the consultant indicated several months ago that the funding level is inadequate to provide these programs and services.

In the last few years, our actual cost of providing services has increased by 17%. Increases in workers compensation, health insurance and other basic expenses of running an organization make up this increase.

If we are not able to offer competitive wages to employees or provide good quality health insurance we cannot hire or retain quality staff. With the type of populations we serve in our developmental disabilities programs, consistency of staff is crucial to quality care. Change is very hard on this population. The loss of a trusted staff member because the staff member needs to find a better paying job or a job with better benefits is very disruptive to the very people we are entrusted to serve. The individuals in our program develop a strong bond with the staff members, a bond that may be, as strong as, or stronger than with any other person in their life. The people we serve in this program are among the most vulnerable populations in the state and they need and deserve quality consistent care.

Along with the day habilitation program we receive funding for transportation services. However, the reimbursement in the transportation cost plans for our participants doesn't include the extra cost of staff time or equipment to operate the vehicles to run this program. This limits our ability to provide services to everyone that needs them.

As an organization we provide vocational rehabilitation services as well and would agree with that testimony given earlier today.

Thank you to all of you for inviting testimony regarding these services and also for the increase we received in this program two years ago. Thank you for your service to the people of our state and safe guarding the needs of the state's most vulnerable citizens.

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