

TESTIMONY
Of
Anne Carlsen Center
By
Calvin N. Rolfson
To
Senate Human Services Committee
On
January 10, 2011
RE:
Senate Bill No. 2043

Madam Chairman, members of the Committee, my name is Cal Rolfson. I represent the Anne Carlsen Center in Jamestown, ND. I appear to propose an amendment to SB 2043 and to present some additional background.

During the last Legislative Session, there was much discussion in the appropriations committees about the unfairness with which various DD service providers were treated financially. Among them at that time was the Anne Carlsen Center. ^{HB 1556} SB 1056 was drafted with the view in mind to independently study the way in which DD facilities were funded. As you know, there is basically a daily rate that facilities receive, based on historical costs, that has an inadequate bearing upon the severity of the clients that facilities currently serve, with final payment for services being received ²⁴⁺ 18-24 months later under the cost based system currently in place. For example, the Anne Carlsen Center, like a step-down ICU, cares for children and young adults that are among the most medically fragile and behaviorally challenged in the State, yet receives a flat daily reimbursement rate from the department that does not fully take into account these levels of acuity.

When ^{HB 1556} SB 1056 and its study authorization was adopted last Session, and the department hired Burnes and Associates to conduct the study. B & A is nationally

recognized as a leader in this area. By any reasonable measure this was the first time since the ARC law suit over 30 years ago that the DD funding mechanism was externally studied and good recommendations resulted. So, the B & A study was and is a significant piece of analysis and their recommendations have been reported to the Interim Long Term Care Committee this past October.

The Interim Long Term Care Committee directed the Department to create a pilot project that is the subject of this Bill before you today. Doubtless, because of the complexity of creating essentially the first new method of funding DD providers in decades, the Interim felt that it was important to get it right and to do a pilot project with selected providers during this coming biennium. We agree. The Anne Carlsen Center has been assured by members of the Interim Committee and by the Department that the Center would be one of the facilities participating in the pilot project particularly due to their diversity of clients, the need to validate an assessment methodology for children and the significant level of client acuity - making the Center a valuable participant in the pilot project. There will be other facility participants as well.

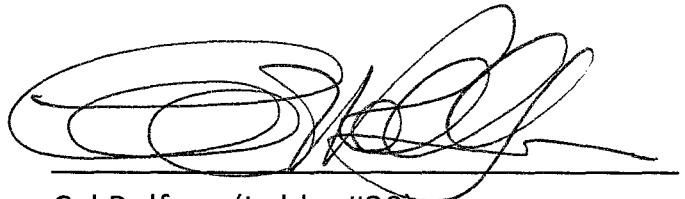
During the past interim while the B & A study was being conducted, under the direction of the Department, there was created an advisory-type committee to assist the Department and the B & A study analysts in providing helpful input from the providers because they were the very basis of the study in the first place. The Anne Carlsen Center believes that this valuable concept should continue during the pilot project interim.

It would serve little purpose, after all the helpful input from providers during the study, to now find their continued input of little or no value during the pilot project implementation stage contemplated by SB 2043. The Department has always been supportive of this type of feedback from those whom they fund in this important support of our vulnerable citizens, so we hope they will support this added and heartfelt effort to continue that feedback during this coming Interim.

Referring to the amendment we are offering, it is before you. It simply requires input from those affected by these important Department decisions and still leaves the decisions to the Department. It also underscores the belief that this Legislative Assembly and the next one, should have an interest in what is happening and to hear that from the Department as well as from those affect by this very new and important funding process.

The Anne Carlsen is honored to appear before you today. You are all welcome to tour the Center any time you are going through Jamestown. You will never come away without being affected by seeing the care that is provided and visiting with those whom we are privileged to serve, as is certainly also true of all the dedicated DD providers throughout the State.

Allow me to answer any questions if you have any. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cal Rolfson', written over a horizontal line.

Cal Rolfson (Lobby #38)

The Anne Carlsen Center

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 2043

Page 1, line 7, after the period insert “The department shall form a steering committee consisting of representatives from the department and from developmental disabilities service providers for the purpose of conceptualizing, developing, designing, implementing and evaluating the pilot project. Each provider whose facility is a participant in the pilot project shall also be represented on the steering committee. The department and the steering committee shall report the progress and results of the pilot project to the designated 2011-2012 interim committee and the sixty-third legislative assembly of North Dakota.”

Renumber accordingly