Association of Rehabilitation Facilities
Florida ARF
A Voice for Community Agencies

Suzanne Sewell
President & CEO

Jean-Marie Moore
Board Chair

February 16, 2009

Governor Charlie Crist
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL

Dear Governor Crist:

On behalf of the membership of the Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, we are writing to thank you for your leadership and for your support of individuals with disabilities. Also, we are thrilled to hear how Florida's citizens can benefit from the Economic Recovery Act stimulus dollars and we applaud your leadership in this area as well.

As you are probably well aware, human services agencies in Florida and the individuals they serve have suffered greatly as we have experienced several funding reductions within the last two years. These cuts have resulted in a strained service system that is having difficulty meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Based on the above, we ask that your office use the stimulus dollars to prevent further funding reductions to service programs that serve individuals with disabilities. Further, we ask that you use the dollars to reinstate targeted funding reductions that are scheduled to occur over the next two years. Finally, we ask for reinstatement of funding levels that have occurred over the last two years. Our specific requests are as follows:

- No further funding reductions for FY 08-09 or FY 09-10 for services for individuals with disabilities including services funded through the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (DD Waivers), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Agency for Health Care Administration, and Department of Health (Early Steps, Brain and Spinal Cord Injury, etc.)
- Elimination of geographic differential rate reductions for residential habilitation services that began July 1, 2008, and subsequent reductions for the next two fiscal years (estimated at $10 million total for the three year period).

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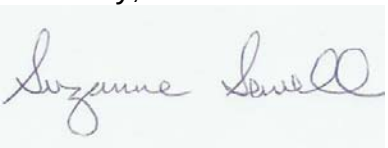
- Reinstatement of ICF/DD rate reductions that were implemented October 1, 2008, and subsequent reductions that will occur after that date for at least two more fiscal years (estimated at $6 million per year).
- Reinstatement of VR Adult Handicapped Fund reductions that have been taken over the last two years (estimated at $3 million over a two year period).
- Targeting of a percentage of Workforce Innovation dollars to enhance employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.
- Use of VR stimulus dollars to assist disabled adults in preparing for and sustaining gainful employment.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our requests. If you or your staff members have questions about our concerns, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,



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