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February 10, 2020

Honorable Will Carpenter, Chair
Representative Leonard Mastroni
Representative Barbara Ballard
Representative Suzi Carlson
Representative Owen Donohoe
Representative Ron Howard
Representative Megan Lynn
Representative Monica Murnan
Representative Susan Ruiz

Re: HB 2550

Hello,

My name is Shelia Nelson-Stout. I am the CEO of OCCK, Inc.

First and foremost, thank you so much for the increases over the past years. We have been able to give 3% increases each year, and increase direct service staff base wages by \$1 for the past 2 years.

OCCK, Inc. provides services to more than 3,000 people each year, and we employ 280 staff.

Our services are designed to help people live in the community as independently as possible. We work with children and adults of any age.

OCCK currently serves 430 people with developmental disabilities. Of those 430, about 40% have a secondary mental illness diagnosis. Staff turnover in 2019 was 44%.

The 44% turnover in 2019 was the lowest turnover rate of the last 3 years. We have also struggled to keep stable front-line supervisors and believe that contributes to our turnover.

There are currently 143 people on the waiting list in our nine county area. The last person to come off the list had been waiting since June of 2011.

We certainly support funding for the waiting list because no one wants people in crisis because of a lack of service, but we would struggle with capacity if very many people come off the waiting list.

I am asking for your support of House Bill 2550.

It is imperative that we be able to continue to stabilize our workforce so that we may continue to expand services in our area of North Central Kansas.

Sincerely,

Shelia Nelson-Stout