

104 Summit Avenue  
Park River, ND 58270

**My letter is concerning the Federal funded Family Caregiver Support Program. The office is based at the North Dakota Department of Human Services in Grand Forks.**

**I began using this wonderful program on December 13, 2007. Because of health issues my husband needed to have someone with him at all times. Before we had the program I was not able to leave Ray by himself for any length of time. I could not afford to hire someone to stay with him so I could go out of town on errands. The Program is literally a lifesaver. It also allowed the amount of \$300 a fiscal year to purchase incontinence supplies and adaptive equipment.**

**We used this Federal program until Ray died on October 3, 2011.**

**The reason I am writing this is that the amount of money that was allotted to me in a fiscal year back in 2007 was \$1,788.75. The person who came to be with my husband earned \$13.16 an hour.**

**In 2011 the year that my husband died the allotment was \$ 2186.40 for the fiscal year. The Respite person received \$16.64 an hour.**

**In 2014 the amount that was allotted was \$3,418 a fiscal year and the person who comes to stay with the client receives \$19.19 an hour.**

**The allotment from 2011 to 2014 increased only \$281.60 and the Respite care increased \$2.55.**

**As an example. Park River is 65 miles from Grand Forks. Takes over an hour to get to Grand Forks and because I could only go maybe**

every 4 or 5 months I had ever so many errands to complete. That one day could easily take 9 to 10 hours.

It is vitally important for the caregiver to be able to have some free time.

Could it be brought up to the legislatures that the state of North Dakota could also contribute to this program to help families with caregiver problems? The amount of \$3,418 a fiscal year does not go very far especially when the caregiver receives \$19.19 an hour for wages. A good caregiver deserves to be well paid so I have no problem with the wages but my problem is that the family should have a larger amount issued each fiscal year.

If the person who needed to be cared for would be at a Nursing Home and the family could not afford the \$7,000 a month and the county paid that bill this would be a saving for the state. I had looked into the cost of the local Nursing Home for my husband and that is the amount that it would have been for Ray because about everything needed to be done for him.

I would even be willing to come to Bismarck to speak to the legislatures when they are in session to have them be aware of the need to be awarded more assistance.

Sincerely,

Laura Alkofer

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