I hope these uncertain times finds your families well. My name is Andrea Peyla-Cossette. On March 10, 2020, I attended ARRM/MORH Disability Services Day at the Capitol. I was with a group from Wabasha County, Great River Homes, Inc. I had the opportunity to speak with Representative Barb Haley and Senator Mike Goggin regarding Leveraging Workforce Resources (HF 3206/ SF 3117). In December I retired and moved to Wabasha, MN to be closer to my 85-year-old father as he recently became a widower.

At the time of my visit, two of my sisters who receive I/DD services lived in a split level group home in Rochester, MN. I am also one of their co-guardians. My sisters who receive I/DD services are Suzanne, age 57 and Christina, age 49. They have lived together in a group home for over 30 years and are very close. Both are very active in the community and have worked together in housekeeping for many years.

Recently, Great River Homes, Inc. had a bedroom in a one level home become available in Wabasha, MN for Suzanne. Suzanne is having joint issues which makes ambulating stairs and housekeeping increasingly difficult. Suzanne's new home allows her to be closer to family in a setting that better fits her aging needs as well as provides opportunities for less physical employment.

Suzanne's new home in Wabasha has a 5th bedroom which is sitting vacant because of "245A.11 Subd. 2(g) The commissioner shall not issue a new adult foster care license under paragraph (f) after June 30, 2019." This bedroom is a perfect bedroom for Christina. It is a new, spacious, sparkling clean room that is an unused asset. My sisters want to continue living together and ask daily when Christina will be able to move into the 5th bedroom. They also want to live near my father and I in Wabasha. It means so much to our father to have them close by as he can visit much more often. Please strongly consider using the assets in place when it comes to 5th bedrooms. There are so many that can benefit such as my family.

Thank you!
Andrea Peyla-Cossette