

Human Services Committee
S.B. No. 280 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Testimony by Patricia Rose
1/29/15

Good afternoon Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and members of the Human Services Committee. My name is Patricia Rose and I would like to start by explaining how I am involved with DSS. As both a recipient of services and a provider of nonmedical in home care services for other recipients, I have seen many sides of the operational policies, management, and individual services. There are many issues that need to be looked into and "repaired" these being only the hardships I have found in dealing with DSS.

- Unless you have a "team" of support people and have been diagnosed with a Mental Disability or severe Physical disability you are not assigned a particular social worker which makes it difficult to get appropriate services. For example: Though I am on total disability, I have not been assigned a social worker. While needing surgery that will put me in a position where I will need in-home care services myself, I was not able to contact a social worker to help me set it up or find out what I was eligible for.
- This then leads to the problem of contacting anyone at DSS. When trying to reach the DSS call center there is always a waiting period of an hour or more before you can reach a human. By then you're confused about what you may have called for in the first place.
- Then once you finally are able to talk to a human you may find that not all your paper work has been processed even though it was all mailed out at the same time.
- Even though you have turned in a new redetermination form showing you no longer work for a certain person you need to send a letter from that employee stating your end date. This is not explained in the first place.

As a person who has worked and paid taxes for over thirty years, and still continues to strive for a better future, I feel I deserve better services. For those of us with disabilities it is often a struggle just to get out of bed never mind need to fight for rights to our benefits. Please reconsider the current operational policies with the DSS so that the recipients with disabilities can concentrate on getting better instead of constantly asking themselves, "How am I going to pay this bill?" or "How do I get help for this?"