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## Advocate. Educate. Connect.

January 28, 2014

Director John Martin  
Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities  
30 E. Broad St., 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Director Martin:

We are writing to you to bring to your attention an issue related to the under- utilization of Adult Foster Care/ Adult Family Living (AFC/AFL) options, under the Individual Options (I/O) Waiver. OPRA has a number of members with historic experience and expertise in providing these services. Over the past three months, these members have met collaboratively to discuss how to further educate individuals, their families and advocates, and County Boards on the benefits of AFC/AFL.

As you are aware, the nature of the service often creates a loving family environment for both individual and provider. Its cost effectiveness is well documented. Several examples of existing adult foster care settings indicate that this model can well serve individuals across the spectrum including those with significant health and behavioral challenges.

In an environment where the sustainability of the Medicaid program in all of its components is called into question, it is incumbent on all policy makers to identify, encourage, and incentivize those particular service options that best balance quality outcomes with cost. Adult Foster Care/Adult Family Living clearly meets both goals.

Ironically, across the state, AFC/AFL does not appear to be a primary service of choice by governing entities. The number of individuals served has not increased in relation to enrollment on the IO waiver as a whole and does not seem, as a generalization, to be a priority among local service and support administrators. The reasons for this seem unclear.

We believe now is the time to convene a collaborative group of representative system stakeholders to identify the benefits of Adult Foster Care/Adult Family Living, explore reasons why it has not been widely used, and develop a clear plan for promoting and expanding its use. As a member organization

we can bring to the table the necessary resources to assist in promoting and providing this valuable service statewide.

We respectfully request the Department to begin this effort by inviting stakeholders to the table and providing leadership throughout the discussions.

We stand ready to support this effort. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Mark Davis  
President, Ohio Provider Resource Association

Cc: REM/The Mentor Network

Ohio Valley Residential Services, Inc.

Caregiver Homes

Koinonia Homes

Hattie Larlham

Ardmore, Inc