

1 State of Arkansas
2 84th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2003

HCR 1010

4
5 By: Representatives C. Taylor, House, Seawel
6 By: Senator Hill

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9 **HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

10 EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT
11 THE CRISIS IN RECRUITING AND RETAINING DIRECT-
12 SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS IMPEDES THE AVAILABILITY OF
13 A STABLE, HIGH QUALITY DIRECT SUPPORT WORKFORCE.

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15 **Subtitle**

16 EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE GENERAL
17 ASSEMBLY THAT THE EMPLOYMENT CRISIS IN
18 DIRECT-SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS IMPEDES THE
19 AVAILABILITY OF A STABLE, HIGH QUALITY
20 DIRECT SUPPORT WORKFORCE.

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22 WHEREAS, more than three hundred thousand (300,000) Arkansans have
23 disabilities, including individuals with developmental disabilities, and
24 approximately three hundred fifty thousand (350,000) Arkansans are age sixty-
25 five (65) and over; and

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27 WHEREAS, individuals with disabilities and those in the aging community
28 have substantial limitations in their functional capacities, including
29 limitations in two (2) or more of the areas of self-care, receptive and
30 expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, independent living,
31 economic self-sufficiency, and the continuous need for individually planned
32 and coordinated services; and

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34 WHEREAS, for the past two (2) decades individuals with disabilities and
35 those in the aging community and their families have increasingly expressed
36 their desire to live and work in their communities, joining the mainstream of



1 American life; and

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3 WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court, in its decision in Olmstead
4 v. L.C., affirmed the right of individuals with disabilities and those in the
5 aging community to receive community-based services as an alternative to
6 institutional care; and

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8 WHEREAS, the demand for community supports and services is rapidly
9 growing, as states comply with the Olmstead decision and continue to move
10 more individuals from institutions into the community; and

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12 WHEREAS the demand will also continue to grow as family caregivers age,
13 individuals with disabilities and those in the aging community live longer,
14 waiting lists grow, and services expand; and

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16 WHEREAS, our nation's long-term care delivery system is dependent upon
17 a disparate array of public and private funding sources and is not a
18 conventional industry, but rather is financed primarily through third-party
19 insurers; and

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21 WHEREAS, Medicaid financing of supports and services to individuals
22 with disabilities and those in the aging community varies considerably from
23 state to state, causing significant disparities across geographic regions,
24 among differing groups of consumers, and between community and institutional
25 supports; and

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27 WHEREAS, outside of families, private providers that employ direct-
28 support professionals deliver the preponderance of supports and services for
29 individuals with disabilities and those in the aging persons living in the
30 community; and

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32 WHEREAS, direct-support professionals provide, on a day-to-day basis, a
33 wide range of supportive services to individuals with disabilities and those
34 in the aging community, including habilitation, health needs, personal care
35 and hygiene, employment, transportation, recreation, and house keeping and
36 other home management-related supports and services so that these individuals

1 can live and work in their communities; and

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3 WHEREAS direct-support professionals generally assist individuals with
4 disabilities and those in the aging community to lead a self-directed family,
5 community, and social life; and

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7 WHEREAS, private providers and the individuals for whom they provide
8 supports and services are in jeopardy as a result of the growing crisis in
9 recruiting and retaining a direct-support workforce; and

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11 WHEREAS, providers of supports and services to individuals with
12 disabilities and those in the aging community typically draw from a labor
13 market that competes with other entry-level jobs that provide less physically
14 and emotionally demanding work, and higher pay; and

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16 WHEREAS, annual turnover rates of direct-support workers range from
17 forty percent (40%) to seventy-five percent(75%); and

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19 WHEREAS, high rates of employee vacancies and turnover threaten the
20 ability of providers to achieve their core mission, which is the provision of
21 safe and high-quality supports to individuals disabilities and those in the
22 aging community; and

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24 WHEREAS ,direct-support staff turnover is emotionally disruptive for
25 the individuals being served; and

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27 WHEREAS, many family members are becoming increasingly afraid that
28 there will be no one available to take care of their sons and daughters with
29 disabilities and aging individuals who are living in the community; and

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31 WHEREAS, this workforce shortage is the most significant barrier to
32 implementing the Olmstead decision and undermines the expansion of community
33 integration as called for by President Bush's New Freedom Initiative, placing
34 the community support infrastructure at risk;

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36 NOW THEREFORE,

1 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
2 STATE OF ARKANSAS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:

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4 THAT the Arkansas General Assembly expresses its sense that community
5 inclusion and enhanced lives for individuals with disabilities and those in
6 the aging community is at serious risk because of the crisis in recruiting
7 and retaining direct-support professionals, which impedes the availability of
8 a stable, high quality direct-support workforce.

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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Arkansas General Assembly seeks to address
11 the crisis by taking advantage of all resources, both federal and state, for
12 developing and expanding career options and opportunities to meet this
13 workforce crisis of direct-care professions in Arkansas.