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February 17, 2003

Honorable Members of the Legislature

My name is Rosetta Johnson. I live at 2600 Spinnaker Drive, Reno, Nv. I am a parent of a son with mental illness, and I am the president and ceo of the Human Potential Development, Inc. organization.

I am honored to have the privilege of speaking before you, again, as I have for many years. I am grateful to you for your interest and your work for people with mental illness and their families. You have continually shown us a legislative body of high moral and ethical standards as you meet the needs of your constituents.

For the record, I support the mental health budget. Governor Guinn recognizes our mental health needs, and as a conscientious leader, has given us a budget which contains essential elements, such as the newer medications, housing, and especially for Las Vegas, the Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) and new hospital which are critical to the safety and recovery of the seriously mentally ill citizen.

I have advocated for people with serious mental illness and their families for many years with a passion I gained from the, suffering, pain, neglect, discrimination and fear of a terrible disease called mental illness. In this time, and effort, I have had the privilege to work with some of the administrators and staff who has become partners with me in establishing programs which produce stunning results without additional money to the state.

One such program, Family Psychoeducation Program (FPP) was sponsored by my organization, Human Potential Development, in January, 2002. We paid for a psychiatrist to come to the Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services facility to train 18 staff members to form two teams which meet twice monthly with patients and family members and staff to discuss ways to work together for the patient's recovery. NNAMHS is the only facility in Nevada which has this program. The FPP is conducted by trained staff as facilitators without additional cost. The remarkable result of this program is that family, patient and professional are all able to come together to sort out problems and issues which may hinder recovery. The FPP is one of the seven best evidenced based programs in the United States with a recovery rate of 50%.

The other program, Systems Integration For The Seriously Mentally Ill (SISMI) is now being organized. As a family member, I have experienced, as has President Bush, the need to address fragmentation, duplication and gaps in mental health services and so I have launched SISMI. Three pilot agencies, HIV/AIDS, Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services facility, and Parole and Probation with Department of Corrections. Systems integration requires collaboration between the multiple state, regional and local-level agencies, organizations and treatment providers that offer housing and treatment services to individuals with mental illness, co-occurring substance use disorders and involvement with the criminal justice system. Systems integration goals require five essential activities reaching across multiple systems: 1 Sharing of information 2 Sharing of planning 3 Sharing of clients 4 Sharing of resources 5 Sharing of responsibilities. This is a two-year program.

I would like the opportunity at some time of presenting this program to you in its entirety.

Thank you.



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EXHIBIT N Senate Committee on Finance

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