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My daughter MacKenzie L. Rhody is a 22 year old special needs young adult who currently lives at home with me full time. She is currently a student and attends Woodland Development.

When MacKenzie turned 18 years of age an advocate from ARC helped me complete her Person Center Plan with her CMH case manager and she started receiving CLS hours of 10 a week. And during summer she would receive 20 hours a week. . With Mackenzie's special needs she is not able to be left alone and does require 24 hour day supervision. And during the school year her hours would be reduced to 10 until this last year and it was reduced to 6 hours. Keeping in mind that the Person Center Plan has not changed and MacKenzie has not reached any of her main goals. So when I questioned and reviewed with the case manager her comment was you can ask for more but no one is getting it and would be a waste of my time. And that I should be prepared for more cuts and probably be cut down to 4 hours weekly. And she even advised my CLS worker that I receive Chore Service Funds and should use my money to self-pay her hours to help meet MacKenzie's needs and goals. I was completely offended that a case manager can disclose my personal finances to anyone. Is that the intent of Chores Service Funds?

And with all the budget cuts from CMH and Community Enterprise it has been very difficult managing her needs while working full time. So I questioned many times to change to self-determination to be told several times that I was not eligible as did not have enough hours. And thru the help of other parents I was able to proof that to be incorrect. So at the last meeting to change to self- determination to be more involved of her benefits I questioned about the home of your own program. Only to be told that CMH is no longer allowing new home of your own to be started as not cost effective. And when I asked about my other options of possible group home I was told that beds are limited or not available and that I could look but does not mean any available and that means to keep MacKenzie at home. While my plan is to keep her at home for as long as possible I am frustrated and concerned that the disabled are being forgotten. The Medicaid dollars have not been reduced and to my understanding St. Clair Co CMH still receives her funds so where are her benefit dollars going? This is very frustrating to me as a parent I work full time pay my taxes and do everything I can to meet her needs but what happens when I am no longer able to. Where do the disabled end up?

My plan since MacKenzie was 13 years old and I first heard about home of your own program was to gather as much information as possible and make sure that is where she lived. I want her to have as much control of her living arrangements as possible. So why is it being removed as an option in St Clair Co CMH? Why are the disabled losing the right to choose a home? Do I need to move to a County that does not use Medicaid dollars to purchase new vans and do building repairs with my daughter's money? And why is MacKenzie receiving less CLS hours than others?

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Hamilton