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To members of the Select Committee on Children:

Thank you for accepting this written statement, regarding Riverview Hospital, in lieu of my being in attendance at the December 18 public hearing. I will keep my comments brief, but invite you to contact me regarding any questions or additional detail you wish to have.

You may recall I was one of several Riverview employees who gave testimony to the Select Committee on Children in February 2006 and later that year, and that I spoke then strongly against the course taken by the previous administration of the hospital.

Following those 2006 hearings, then-commissioner Dunbar coordinated extensive consultation and planning processes with experts from outside and within Riverview, 1199, and dozens of multi-discipline volunteers from the ranks of Riverview's staff. Also, late in 2006, DCF issued its own Program Review of the Hospital.

Since then, under the new administration of Joyce Welch, the recommendations generated in all of these forums have been consolidated into the Hospital's Strategic Plan. I am pleased to say that, in contrast to my testimony in 2006, I can now speak with conviction **in support of the current Riverview administration**, who have implemented the following:

The hospital program has been revised to a level where it comprehensively meets best practice standards as outlined by NASMHPD\*\* and SAMHSA\*\*, and other leaders in the behavioral health field.

This revision is supported by a drastically improved training program which began this fall. It includes extensive leadership competency training. It incorporates methods of training that meet emerging standards for the development of core competencies at all levels of the organization, and for improved retention and application of trained material.

There has been extensive work on the organizational structure of the hospital, to establish clear lines of communication, stable decision-making structures, and clearly defined leadership roles.

With this organizational clarity, we will break with a long-standing status quo, which kept the varied professional disciplines here from working together as effectively as we needed to. I believe that our administration is resolute in sustaining the shift toward maximum collaboration among disciplines to ensure that children receive the most comprehensive services.

Riverview has always excelled in its ability to provide the most thorough evaluation of children's behavioral and mental health needs. Thanks to our current administration, we are now in position to bring not only the best clinical assessment, but also the best treatment planning and service delivery to each child, more effectively and efficiently than ever before.

*We are confident that Riverview's improvements will reduce operating costs at the same time they increase the quality of care we provide, putting into action the saying: "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."*

Your support, in the form of continued high expectations and regular dialogue with us about the facility, will help ensure our success. Thank you for your time!

\*\* (National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. )