

TO: SENATOR CARYN TYSON, Assessment and Taxation Committee and Members of the Committee

DATE: February 2, 2018

FROM: MARCIA TAMMEUS, Parent of Individual Served

RE: In Support of Friends of JCDS Tax Exemption Request (SB-345) Written Testimony Only

I have been involved with Friends of JCDS for many years because I have a son with intellectual disabilities. Friends of JCDS, Inc is a local non-profit that provides affordable and accessible housing, assistance with basic needs and other support programs for adults with disabilities in Johnson County.

Their largest, and on-going project, is the "barrier-free housing project." Over the last 20 years, Friends has purchased 12 homes. These homes are renovated for wheelchair accessibility. My son Chris lives in house #11 and it has become "home" to him. Because of what JCDS does, Chris has a life of his own and goes to work every day. Because of Friends of JCDS, Chris has a home in a neighborhood, probably much like yours, with three housemates to share his home life.

Inclusion in the community is important for our family members, and that means a handicap accessible and a safe home. Maintaining such homes is costly and to be burdened with taxes on supplies and materials to meet standards, seems unfair for a not-for-profit to absorb, when the money could be spent more wisely to benefit those who need our support.

Friends has been a not-for-profit organization for many years, and I find it hard to believe that tax exemption has not been attainable in regard to their housing project. There is so much more that Friends could do to support these incredible individuals if tax exemption is approved, and in the long run, save money in other ways. Funding to support this program is always a challenge and of ongoing concern to families who may not always be around to continue to advocate and provide outside resources for their loved one.

My hope is that tax exemption can be approved to help make the future of these clients even better, brighter, and safer. Living as independently as possible, is only possible for my son in a barrier free house, and I am grateful that Friends has made that possible.

Sincerely yours,



Marcia Tammeus

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