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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

April 14, 1998

COMMITTEES

AGING AND YOUTH
MAJORITY CHAIRMAN
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The Honorable Feather O. Houstoun, Secretary
Department of Public Welfare
333 Health and Welfare Building
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Dear Secretary Houstoun:

As Majority Chairman of the House Aging and Youth Committee, I want to thank you for extending the public comment period for the Child Residential and Day Treatment Facilities proposed rulemaking. In addition, I appreciate the willingness of your staff to meet with Aging and Youth Committee staff in order to discuss this proposal in further detail.

The extent of the public comments submitted are, I believe, truly indicative of the need for further discussions with the provider community and parents of those children who benefit from the services covered within the scope of this regulatory package. Given the specificity of the comments, I do not feel it is necessary to reiterate each precise issue at this point in time. I strongly encourage you, as such, to engage the department in such "stakeholder" discussions in order to formulate a final regulatory package that represents a common sense approach to ensuring that all children utilizing these services as well as the staff who work in these various environments, are provided with the maximum protections for their health, safety and well-being.

In addition, it is essential that every effort be made to recognize the diversity of the needs of the children who are served in the various settings which are proposed to be covered by these regulations. Certainly, we should not infringe on attempts to normalize clients, when appropriate. However, we must also be cognizant of the need to allow for implementation of certain techniques and behavior intervention procedures that are unique to the specific issues affecting the various types of populations being served.

I look forward to continuing to work with you on this most important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "L. Gruppo".

Representative Leonard Q. Gruppo
Majority Chairman
House Aging and Youth Committee

cc: Mr. John R. McGinley, Jr., Chairman, IRRC ✓
Commissioner Alvin Bush
Commissioner Arthur Coccodrilli
Commissioner Robert J. Harbison, III
Commissioner John F. Mizner
Robert E. Nyce, Executive Director, IRRC
Richard M. Sandusky, Director of Regulatory Analysis, IRRC
Mary Lou Harris, Regulatory Analyst, IRRC
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