

October 10, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

In my work with Bent County Department of Social Services TANF and Child Welfare clients I have recognized that at times clients do not have the resources to be independent and get themselves to and from appointments, especially when they are out of town. I would like to take this opportunity to share my support and appreciation for the Las Animas Helping Hands program and the many ways in which this program, and their dedicated volunteer staff, has provided needed resources and support to our clients. When our clients feel they cannot get to their appointments, etc they may accept that this is unavoidable because of their lack of resources or support systems. I have found that in the process of developing a helping and trusting relationship with clients they will share their frustration and helplessness about these life circumstances. This is when I am able to share with them that Las Animas Helping Hands program and their staff are willing and able to assist them with these challenges. Initially they are hesitant to ask for help but after contact with Sharon Barber and other staff my clients realize that getting to their appointments is also important to us, as a helping team, and begin to rely on services rather than “giving up”.

Las Animas Helping Hands provides a safe and reliable way of addressing their needs, e.g. rides to and from medical appointments, SSI appointments, assistance with completing forms that are confusing and difficult for them to navigate, and someone who considers their needs in a kindly and helpful manner. Las Animas Helping Hands program supports our clients' **independence** and at the same time assists them in developing the confidence to ask for assistance when it is necessary. We work together, as **community** helping professionals, to provide support during our clients' transition to independence in all areas of their lives.

In closing, I respectfully ask that you consider Las Animas Helping Hands community program as deserving of any funding that will help them to continue to provide services in our community. These services are integral to our clients becoming “more” of what they deserve to be! Thank you for your consideration in this very important matter!

Sincerely,

Jeri J Zimmermann

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Private Contractor

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