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The Secretary
Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Secretary,

Re: Senate Inquiry into Residential and Community Aged Care in Australia

I respectfully submit the following for your consideration in this important matter, with respect to the planning and allocation of Residential Aged Care services.

In a recent statement, the Minister for Ageing said, "Most older residents prefer to continue living close to their families, friends and local community once they require aged care accommodation."

This is exactly the point that this organization has been trying to make to the Department of Health and Ageing for some time. In various representations in recent years, we have asked that a realignment of boundaries be considered. Summerhill has existed in the Adelaide Hills since the 1970's, and it appeals in particular to people who identify as Hills residents, and it is firmly established in the hearts and minds of the Adelaide Hills community as an Adelaide Hills organization.

However, the Department considers Summerhill to be part of the Adelaide Eastern Metropolitan region, which is an "over bedded" area, so all of our requests for additional licences have been refused on that basis. I understand that the Hills as a region is not "over bedded". Nevertheless, we are constantly receiving requests from local people for care and accommodation services which we are not able to fulfill.

Furthermore, in spite of the fact that we were granted additional respite time last year, we are now fully booked for respite until mid May 2009.

Hills people do not consider themselves to be metropolitan residents, and frequently wish to find Aged Care accommodation and services in the Hills where they feel most comfortable, and where they are near to their families, friends and community. They are reluctant and distressed at the prospect of having to move down to the city at such a vulnerable time in their lives.

It is clear that the need for additional residential Aged Care places in this area has been established, and this organization could accommodate two additional licences immediately. A submission will be put to the Aged Care Approvals Round next month,

but I believe it is important that the boundaries used by the Department reflect the reality of communities of identity, such as has been outlined above and as pertains in this community.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter, and I wish you well in your deliberations in this important inquiry.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of any assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Bleby', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Peter Bleby

Administrator
Summerhill Community Care Services Inc.
RACS # 6104