



May 3, 2007

Dear County Commissioners,

I have watched a diverse group of citizens concerned about our over-crowded jail coalesce into a grassroots organization committed to doing something about the problem. I have seen their passion to do something transformed into action to help people who have been repeatedly incarcerated in our jail turn their lives around and stay out of jail. I was very pleased when New Leaf - New Life received the grant from the Indiana Institute for Criminal Justice to develop the Community Model program in the jail aimed at reducing recidivism. During my tenure as President of the Monroe County Council we appropriated the funds for the first year of the project. New Leaf - New Life has risen to the challenge and met and exceeded every milestone laid out in the initial proposal.

I have reviewed the goals and objectives proposed for the next six months of the project and strongly endorse the grant application by New Leaf - New Life. The next six months have three primary goals:

- 1) Strengthen and expand the program in the jail within a continuum of care;
- 2) Strengthen and expand aftercare and reentry services in the community and
- 3) Localize programmatic control for the Community Model in the Monroe County Correctional Center passing from the Center for Therapeutic Justice, a Virginia Corporation, to New Leaf - New Life, Inc., which is locally based in Bloomington.

It has been my distinct pleasure, and honor, to devote personal time towards understanding our citizens' efforts towards such positive change. My perspective is also based upon attending special forums, training sessions, visiting the jail as a citizen volunteer over the course of nearly seven years, and speaking with individuals serving time or on probation, and attending program graduation ceremonies.

Thank you in advance for fostering the creation and continuation of therapeutic justice programming in Monroe County. Supporting the grant application is in keeping with the proactive seeking of funding streams Monroe County Government deserves and needs.

Sincerely,

Sophia Travis
Monroe County Council at Large
812-824-7333 or Sophia@littlebear.com