Testimony by Jim Wolf, Administrator, Good Samaritan Home, Battle Lake

 Supporting HF 162

House Committee on Aging and Long-Term Care Policy

March 4, 2015

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee,

My name is Jim Wolf and I am administrator of the Good Samaritan Home in Battle Lake.

I will be brief, which if you knew me better, you would know that is not my usual style. Besides being the administrator at Good Sam I am also the chaplain. And like any preacher, I’d love to tell you a good story

I’ve been in the nursing home business for a long time, more than 35 years. I should be retired but instead I’m just tired.

But not nearly as tired as many of our employees who have to work extra shifts to cover the empty slots we have because we can’t hire enough employees to provide good care for our residents.

I wish I could have brought some of our residents today to talk with you. They would tell you how important it is to them to see the same face from one day to the next, the face of the nursing assistant or LPN or dietary person. These days that is hard to do because we have so much turnover because we can’t pay our employees a decent wage. If they want to be a nursing assistant or an LPN, they can go to the Minnesota Veterans Home and make a lot more. I don’t blame them for wanting to make more. They have to in order to support their families.

We just can’t compete with the wages that the State is able to offer for the very same jobs in the very same kind of long-term care facility.

We all want to thank you for the effort that this committee is making to highlight the needs of long-term care facilities in our state. We strongly support the Imperative bill that the committee passed a few weeks ago. All of us in the long-term care business need this to help us care for our residents.

Our group of facilities also needs this legislation before you today. We have an usual situation with the Minnesota Veterans Home close to us.

We need your help in solving this by passing this legislation and including it in any long-term care bill that finally gets adopted by the legislature this session. All of the nursing homes in the State need your help and we especially need it because of our special circumstances.

Thank you.

We would be happy to answer any questions.