

January 17, 2013

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Representative Matt Caldwell  
District 79, State of Florida  
15191 Homestead Road, Building A  
Lehigh Acres, FL 33971-9749

Dear Representative Caldwell:

As a member of the State of Florida member of the Florida Vision Caucus, I am requesting a few moments to present some issues at the Southwest Florida Legislative Delegation Meeting that are important to the future of Southwest Floridians living with low vision and blindness.

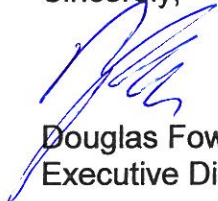
The Lighthouse SWFL, Inc. is a non-profit vision rehabilitation service. We provide services for people impacted by vision loss so that they may live as independently as possible and be productive residents in their community and work environment.

My presentation would only take a few minutes. Here are the points that would be presented:

- The Lighthouse SWFL is partially funded by the State of Florida Division of Blind Services. We also are funded by local grants and foundations.
- Recently there has been a flurry of articles in the press that shed a negative light on the Division of Blind Services in Tallahassee.
- Agencies like ours are separate, individual non-profit centers joined by membership in the Florida Association of Agencies Serving the Blind (FAASB).
- FAASB and its member agencies support the implementation of the Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) process that will be initiated soon, following the Governor's direction for fiscal accountability of all contracts issued by the State.

- FAASB supports the concept that the ITN's criteria have a high level of quality, certification, and credentialing of each agency and its staff.
- Locally, the Lighthouse of SWFL serves nearly 400 clients a year in Lee, Hendry, and Glades Counties.
- The Vision Caucus 2013 will be held in the State Capitol Building February 7<sup>th</sup>. I am inviting each of you to attend and consider joining the largest legislative caucus in Florida and, possibly, the United States.

Sincerely,



Douglas Fowler, LMHC  
Executive Director