

Testimony:

To: House Children and Families Committee  
And House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee

From: Senator Dick Kelsey

Committee members:

I have been heavily involved in the PRTF issue since last March. I do not have a financial interest in PRTFs nor have I ever received one dime of compensation from anyone for the work I have done.

I believe this PRTF issue is a direct illustration of where we are going with managed care. KHS is being paid 2.9 million dollars not to put people in PRTF's and mental health nursing homes. At the current rate they will get that money. We are saving money by not helping young people who badly need this help.

Young people are being put in detentions, shelters, YRC2s or neglected altogether because we do not want to pay for the help they really need.

In the past two months I have had two young ladies try and take their lives in our YRC2 and had to be hospitalized. They belonged in PRTFs but the screeners would not screen them in.

I believe screens should be done by an outside party who does not have a financial interest in the screen. The current system makes the gate keeper out of the group that gains financially by not putting young people in PRTFs.

We as legislators need to be honest and man up when we make budget cuts and admit that we just do not intend to help certain people. Let's quit pretending we are going to give people the help they need when in reality we are not.