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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Special Committee on KanCare Oversight

My name is Shane Heit, I am a licensed social worker in the state of Kansas and currently the Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) Specialist for KVC Behavioral Healthcare. I have specialized in the area of I/DD children/youth in the state of Kansas for the last 20 years. I am recognized by court systems as an expert within the field of I/DD. I have also focused this expertise to I/DD children/youth served within the Kansas child welfare system. I would like to thank you all for the opportunity to speak today on behalf of the children in foster care and discuss the partnership developed between KVC and the Managed Care Organization, Amerigroup.

KVC is serving a growing number of I/DD children within the foster care system. This population continues to increase as communities struggle to provide the unique services needed to stabilize these children. KVC and Amerigroup have been working diligently to bridge this gap in services for I/DD children so these children reach permanency and exit the foster care system. These cases are extremely difficult due to the high levels of care that are often needed for this population to remain in their community. KVC and Amerigroup have recognized that this requires a partnership in order to achieve the highest standard of care for these children in the least restrictive environment. This has been an effort in breaking down the silos between resources and sharing the responsibility of services needed to achieve stability for these children.

There are several recent examples of the positive effect of a partnership such as the one formed between KVC and Amerigroup. In one case, the collaboration between agencies allowed the professionals to realize that a change in waiver services was needed for the child to remain with his/her family. If the collaboration had not occurred between the agencies it is highly likely this single mother would have lost her parental rights due to the amount of time her child had spent in foster care creating further trauma from an unnecessary separation from his/her family.

In closing, this will continue to be a challenging feat, but KVC and Amerigroup are making a commitment to the I/DD children. Through our unique, but necessary collaboration, KVC and Amerigroup will work diligently toward the same goal ensuring that all Kansas children within the child welfare system are treated with care, respect, and dignity to achieve the overall goal of stability within an environment that meets their needs.

