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*"To ensure the opportunity to make choices regarding participation in society  
and quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities"*

Feb. 15, 2018

Re: Proponent HB 2745

Chair Representative Davis, and members of the Committee on Children and Seniors.

I am Steve Gieber, Executive Director of the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities (KCDD). The Council is made up of self-advocates, family members, state agencies, and our partners identified in the Federal Developmental Disabilities Act.

Federal and state laws created the Council to advise policymakers on issues that impact people with disabilities and their families as well as carryout activities that increase Self-Advocacy, Systems Change, and Capacity Building.

The Council develops a five-year plan based on a state-wide comprehensive review and analysis of everything impacting people with Intellectual and Development Disabilities and their families. From that review, we determine where to focus KCDD limited resources to make the most important impact. The council identified the need for better information for families that have transition age children as a top priority.

Partnering with fellow stakeholders, the Council participated in seven town hall meetings across the state to get an understanding of the level of knowledge and understanding of the transition process. The biggest lesson learned from meeting with families, self advocates and professionals is the fact that we still have poor outcomes despite a great deal of activity at both the Federal and State level to improve transition services which should lead to better employment outcomes. For example, the Workforce Innovations and Opportunity act has created additional supports and services but the schools and families don't know how to access those services.

There seems to be an information disconnect between supports available and the families trying to access those services.

The Council is working to help resolve this disconnect. For example, KCDD is hosting a two-day conference in Topeka on May 30-31 2018 to help educate people on services and supports that are available to help improve with employment. The Council has also taken the lead in Kansas as a member of a 17 state collaboration that is in the process of developing and implementing a Life Course Framework that supports people across the life span, including transition aged students.

The Council believes that HB 2745 perfectly aligns with KCDD identified areas of priority and will help Kansas families and individuals achieve better transition outcomes leading to more inclusive and productive lives in the community.

Thank You!

Steve Gieber

Director, KCDD

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