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Written-Only Testimony in Support of HB 2044
House Health and Human Services Committee
January 26, 2017

Chairman Hawkins and members of the Committee:

My name is Mike Burgess. I am the Director of Policy & Outreach at the Disability Rights Center of Kansas (DRC). DRC is a public interest legal advocacy organization that is part of a national network of federally mandated organizations empowered to advocate for Kansans with disabilities. DRC is the officially designated protection and advocacy system in Kansas. DRC is a private, 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, organizationally independent of state government and whose sole interest is the protection of the legal rights of Kansans with disabilities.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2044.

We think this bill is an important first step to help fill a much needed void in the continuum of care in Kansas. There is definitely a need for this type of transitional service to help people with severe and persistent mental illness move down the road to recovery.

The clubhouse model affirms the value of members and their ability to be part of a meaningful community regardless of mental illness.

It is great to authorize accredited programs to be able to utilize these existing billing codes in Medicaid. We look forward to seeing the success of this program and hope there will be the opportunity to expand these types of services (or other Medicaid reimbursable services) to other parts of the state which are consumer directed and consumer controlled, such as Consumer Run Organizations.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support with you.