



LAURA KELLY, Governor • KATHY KECK, Chairperson • STEVE GIEBER, Executive Director

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

Feb 12, 2019

Re: [Neutral testimony on HB 2550](#)

Chair Rep. Carpenter Committee on Social Services Budget

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. The Council is to advise policy makers on issues impacting people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and their families. The Council agrees that the service system is under-funded, and we are experiencing a workforce crisis. The Council, however, is concerned that a simple injection of money doesn't truly address the heart of the problem with the Kansas supports and services system. Additional funds are needed to transform the system into a more long-term sustainable model; we would like to see some much need changes to the service system. The landscape of supports and services have changed nationally, and Kansas needs to respond to those changes.

The Centers for Medicaid Services in the final rule set a date of March 17, 2022 for all states to move all services into community integrated settings or they will no longer provide the Federal portion of the funding. As a state, we need to provide an opportunity for our provider network to transition into a supports model that doesn't jeopardize their long term funding streams, or we will find ourselves in a direr situation in the future.

The Workforce Innovation Opportunities Act (WIOA) is a Federal law that requires that everyone must try community integrated employment first before any other service. This is consistent with Kansas State Employment First Law. Unfortunately, these services aren't available to the majority of Kansans with IDD.

Several years ago Vocational Rehabilitation Service implemented a pay for performance system to pay vendors that provide placement and supported employment services. The rate worked for some people with disabilities but not for Kansans Intellectual and Developmentally Disabilities. The rate wasn't adequate for the vendors to recover cost when serving people with more significant needs. So many vendors quit providing placement and supported employment services for Kansans with I/DD.

Even if a person is able to find competitive integrated employment, much needed ongoing support isn't readily available. The state of Kansas has the lowest Medicaid rate in the nation for supported employment at \$12.00 hour. Because of the low rate the service simply is not available. Medicaid rules state that the rates should cover the cost of providing the service. We should bring in a nationally recognized expert in Medicaid rate setting to help the state develop rates that support people in integrated community employment.

I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Steve Gieber

Director, KCDD (785) 296-2609



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