

Ms. Fabert,

Hello, my name is Richard Herries I live in Eudora Kansas. I have a 23 year old son that has Cerebral Palsy. He has been playing wheelchair sports since he was 15. The way our systems are set up with HIPPA rules and school regulations and other things that I probably don't even know about, it is very difficult for families with disabled individuals, to get information about what services are available to all ages of people with disabilities. It was hard for us to know about what was out there for our very active young man. If, someone would have had the ability to pass on information to us about wheelchair sports at an earlier age he would have been participating as early as the age of 8. We found out about the adult wheelchair basketball team that was based out of Topeka, called the Wheelhawks, through a friend. The Wheelhawks is where our son got introduced to wheelchair sports. I cannot tell you how much my son has changed, for the better, with the inclusion of wheelchair sports. His attitude about everything changed for the positive. Always before wheelchair sports it was, I wish I could play football, I wish I could play basketball.

The reason I am writing you is not to tell you my family history, even though it would be a good read but to tell you that I am in support of Senate Bill 470. Since my family has been involved with the Wheelhawks we have seen 5 of our native Kansans leave our great state to play wheelchair basketball in other states. There were others that left the state before we got involved. It is absolutely crazy that I had to send my son, one of the biggest Jayhawk fans that you will ever meet, shoot his carpet in his room is Crimson and Blue with Jayhawks stamped on it, to Missouri to go to a basketball camp. He went 5 years to a camp at MU. You don't have any idea how hard it was to get that kid to go over there and attend a camp. I had to literally hook a Jayhawk license plate to the back of his chair before he would go. It took the coach at MU 3 years to get my son to wear one of their camp T-shirts. This small amount of communication cannot give justice to how

difficult it was to get him to leave the Crimson and Blue of KU to go to the Black and Gold of MU.

So, what I am saying is I am in favor of Senate Bill 470 not only because I believe that people with disabilities should have the same rights as people without disabilities but I also feel that with KU having a wheelchair basketball team would be a great avenue to get the word out about wheelchair sports in this great state. I hope you and everyone else supports it as well. It is sad to see our native Kansans have to go to another state to participate in wheelchair basketball, when KU IS THE HOME OF BASKETBALL. ROCKCHALK!

Regards,

Richard Herries

Board Member for Kansas Accessible Sports for 6 years