

Testimony – SB 445 – neutral position  
Submitted to the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee  
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Good afternoon Chairman O'Donnell and members of the Committee.

My name is Janis DeBoer. I represent the eleven Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) across the State of Kansas. Collectively, the AAAs serve all 105 counties. The AAAs are part of a national network of AAAs that were established under the Older Americans Act in 1973 to respond to the needs of seniors in every local community. Since 1973, many positive expansions have occurred in Kansas to link the AAA network to the aging community, their caregivers and individuals with disabilities.

I am here today to inform the Committee of the history of the CARE program, the role of the AAAs, and the role of the newly branded Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs).

The CARE process has been in place since 1995. The purpose of the CARE process is two-fold and very straightforward:

1. Comply with federal Preadmission Screening and Resident Review (PASRR) requirements and
2. Inform Kansans, all Kansans, of their community based options in order to delay or reduce nursing facility stays.

The CARE process works. By informing individuals (private pay and others) of their community based options, Kansas experiences a diversion rate each year that reduces or delays nursing facility entry and/or stays. However, the most beneficial outcome of the CARE process is even more impressive. Research shows that if an individual has had a positive experience with community based options, he/she is more likely to return to the community after an acute care episode, such as a broken hip.

The AAAs have administered the CARE process since 1995. It makes sense. Of the 14,000+ CARE assessments conducted each year, almost 80% are for Kansans age 70 and older. The AAAs are able to not only inform individuals of their community based options (via the CARE process), but to assist in the coordination and provision of providing community based services.

Specific to SB 445, we believe it is premature to remove the responsibility of assisting individuals with the CARE process from the AAAs to the newly recognized ADRCs for three reasons:

1. Are far as we know, there are no legal entities in Kansas using the name of Aging and Disability Resource Centers.
2. Instead, ADRCs are more of a new label...a new brand...a new name with a limited history and a limited revenue stream (currently, the AAAs are the ADRC contractor with the KDADS).
3. Why change statutory language when ADRCs may or may not continue into the future.

Thank you and I will be happy to stand for questions.