

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Garry Boston at 1:30 p.m. on February 11, 2002 in Room 210 Memorial Hall

Committee staff present: Dr. Bill Wolff, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Norman Furse, Revisor of Statute's Office  
Renea Jefferies, Revisor of Statute's Office  
June Evans, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Representative Joann Freeborn  
Michael Byington, Guide Dog Users of Kansas  
Lois Young, Osawatomie  
Sara Holbert, Cares, Inc.  
Sharon Huffman, Kansas Commission on  
Disability Concerns

Others attending: See Attached Sheet

Vice-Chairman Jim Morrison presented the Sub-Committee on Credentialing Report on **HB 2315 - an act concerning occupational therapists, licensure thereof** stating the recommendations were: (1) That the subcommittee amendments be adopted and (2) **HB 2315** be passed as amended (Attachment 1).

The Chairperson stated the recommendations were accepted and would try to work the bill tomorrow (2-12-02).

The Chairman opened the hearing on **HB 2715 - Assistance Animals for Handicapped and Disabled Persons.**

Norm Furse, Revisor of Statute's Office, gave a briefing on **HB 2715**, stating there were a number of changes to the current law and some new laws.

The Chairman stated there was no fiscal note on the bill.

Representative Joann Freeborn, a proponent for **HB 2715** stated she brought this bill forth last year but there was difficulty obtaining consensus on language. It is important to have the correct language as to strengthen the rights of disabled persons, and at the same time make it more difficult for those rights to be abused. This bill has been created with the mutual agreement of the disabled community and those organizations involved (Attachment 2).

The Chairman asked if animals other than dogs were covered in this bill?

Representative Freeborn stated she thought legislation would only cover dogs.

Michael Byington, Kansas Telecommunications Access Program, testified as a proponent to **HB 2715**. When the statutes were amended in the late 1980s it was believed every type of assistance dog possible, and every possible situation where a person who has a disability might need to use such a dog was covered. Expansion and advances in both dog training and in the numbers of people who have severe disabilities but who choose to live in their home communities instead of in institutions, however, have created the need for greater specificity in the law.

The adoption of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) at the federal level has probably complicated assistance dog access more than it has improved the situation. At the same time, users of trained and qualified assistance dogs are concerned about abuses because of the

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, Room 210, Memorial Hall at 1:30 p.m. on February 11, 2002.

general nature of the ADA provisions about assistance animals (Attachment 3).

Mr. Byington also provided testimony by his wife, Ann Byington, President, Guide Dog Users of Kansas, supporting **HB 2715** (Attachment 4).

Lois Young, Osawatomie, testified stating for **HB 2715** to be effective there needs to be a clear definition of what constitutes a "specially trained and tested" dog or animal. An accreditation bureau needs to be formed to perform testing and registration of each dog or animal. That the owner of assistance animals have a current doctor's prescription stating the need for an assistance animal. That the bill be very clear on who can be a trainer, 16 states have such requirements for trainers. Some form of identification be issued by the accreditation board and be on the animal or with the handler at all times, 27 states require that animals wear a special collar, harness or leash issued by a department of certification, or they require that the animal wear an ID tag or the owner carry credentials showing the animal has been tested and certified (Attachment 5).

Sara Holbert, CEO, CARES, Inc., Concordia, Kansas, testified in support of **HB 2715**, stating they have placed over 260 assistance dogs in 23 different states, one in Puerto Rico and two in Peru. 141 of these placements were service dogs and hearing dogs and 57% of our placements work here in the state of Kansas. While we are not the largest training facility, we have placed a large number of dogs in specific areas of disabilities that are not being addressed by other schools in the United States.

Public access, protection under the law, as well as the ability to punish violators, will give Kansas citizens working with assistance dogs the assurance that the partnerships they have with their dogs will have been given every consideration by the people chosen to represent them in Topeka.

We would like to ask you to amend the wording of the current bill to include the word "selected" in the following places: New Section 1, (a) "Guide dog" means a dog which has been specially **selected**, trained...(b) "Service dog" means a dog which has been specially **selected**, trained...(c) "Hearing Assistance dog means a dog which is specially **selected**, trained...(d) "Therapeutic Support dog" means a dog which is specially **selected**, trained...(e) "assistance animal" includes dogs...other animals specially **selected**, trained and tested...(Attachment 6).

Sharon Huffman, Legislative Liaison, Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns, Kansas Department of Human Resources, testified as a proponent to **HB 2715**, stating they provide information and education to the legislature and governor on issues of importance to Kansans with disabilities. **HB 2715** is designed to help clarify some of the definitions of various animals used by people with disabilities for support and/or therapy. The bill extends the current protection from discrimination under Kansas Law for persons with disabilities who use such animals to include acquisition and use of rental, residential housing and in the purchase and use of residential housing (Attachment 7).

The Chairman closed the hearing on **HB 2715**.

The Chairman announced the Sub-committee on Credentialing would meet Tuesday and Thursday if time permits.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m. and the next meeting will be February 12, 2002



STATE OF KANSAS

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

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TOPEKA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**Vice-Chairman:**  
JOINT COMMITTEE ON  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
**Vice-Chairman**  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
**Member**  
EDUCATION  
**Member**  
E-GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY  
**MEMBER**  
ETHICS AND ELECTIONS

February 11, 2002

REPORT  
TO THE FULL HOUSE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICE COMMITTEE  
FROM  
HEALTH SUB-COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALING

Committee members:

Jim Morrison, Chair; Patricia Lightner, Vice-Chair; Sue Storm, Ranking Minority; Gwen Welshimer; Nancy Kirk; Lana Gordon; Ray Merrick; Doug Patterson.

Report Concerning:

**House Bill 2315**, an act concerning occupational therapists; licensure thereof.

Sub-Committee Recommendations:

1. That the subcommittee amendments be adopted and
2. HB 2315 be passed as amended.

What the bill does:

This legislation grants the protection of licensure to Occupational therapy for the practices they perform and expresses their relationship with other licensed professions in the health care arena. The bill specifically details that the OT will work under the direction or order of a physician, podiatrist, dentist or optometrist. The term "physician" is defined as a person licensed to practice medicine and surgery (Currently only MDs and DOs)

The legislation further clarifies that OTs working in a school setting "shall not require a referral, supervision, order or direction from" [the enumerated licensed groups]. However, if the OT finds cause to believe that there may be an underlying disorder, injury, illness or disease then the occupational therapist will appropriately refer the client.

Why this bill is needed:

Currently, Occupational therapists are registered. That means a person may not call themselves an occupational therapist but does NOT prohibit them from performing occupational therapy. This change better protects the public for those situations where an individual may be providing occupational therapy services without referral or in a school setting to be illegal.

A balloon amendment is presented with this information so the committee may review the changes and determine the full committee position on the bill. Your sub-committee recommends it be approved as amended and sent to the full House for discussion.

Respectfully submitted

Jim Morrison  
Chair, Health Committee Sub-Committee on Health Credentialing

HsHHS  
2-11-02  
Atch #1



JOANN LEE FREEBORN  
REPRESENTATIVE 107TH DISTRICT  
CLOUD, OTTAWA COUNTIES  
AND PART OF CLAY AND DICKINSON COUNTIES  
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MEMBER: AGRICULTURE  
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TOPEKA  
HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES

TESTIMONY  
HOUSE BILL 27165

Committee on Health and Human Services  
February 11, 2002

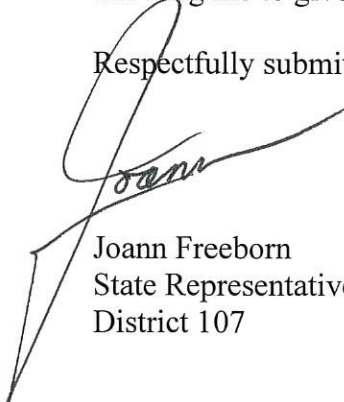
Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you, Chairman Gary Boston and members of the Health and Human Services Committee for allowing me to share. I appreciate your attention and consideration of HB2715 concerning disabled persons, relating to assistance dogs. I believe it is in the best interest of the public to pass this proposal, and I would like to show my support.

Last year I recall working toward this action, but the organizations within the disabled community had difficulty obtaining a consensus on language. It is important to have the correct language as to strengthen the rights of disabled persons, and at the same time make it more difficult for those rights to be abused. This year the bill has been created with the mutual agreement of the disabled community and those organizations involved. I would like to congratulate these groups for reaching a consensus. I believe this bill is a significant step in the right direction, and I appreciate the work that has gone into this process.

I wish to show my support for such an action and encourage the passage of this bill, leaving room for amendment if necessary. Thanks again to Chairman Gary Boston for allowing me to give this brief testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Joann Freeborn  
State Representative  
District 107

Hs HHS  
2-11-02  
Atch #2



February 11, 2002

TO: House Health and Human Services Committee

FROM: Michael Byington

SUBJECT: Support for House Bill 2715

This issue has been going on for so long, I started working on it two employers ago. I was with Envision when discussions started among disability advocates and assistance dog training facilities in Kansas concerning the need to update the Kansas statutes relating to assistance dog access. I then assisted a coalition of advocates and assistance dog training personnel in figuring out what the proposed changes needed to be during my tenure with Byington Advocacy Consulting of Kansas. Now that the bill has been assigned a number, and brought to hearing, I have recently started work as the Director of the Kansas Relay Service, Inc., and of its primary project, the Kansas Telecommunications Access Program (TAP). In these capacities, I work with people having a variety of disabilities to make sure that they have access to basic telecommunications services and equipment.

One thing my most recent three professional endeavors have in common is that in all three positions, I have had the pleasure of working with many individuals who use assistance dogs. I use the term "assistance dog" in a generic vernacular. Specifically, I have experience in working with people who use guide dogs to mitigate the impact of blindness or severely limited vision, service dogs to mitigate limitations caused by physical disabilities, and with people who use hearing assistance dogs because of deafness or severely limited hearing.

What I hope to be able to do with this testimony is give you a background to explain why this legislation is needed, help you understand some of the barriers which had to be overcome in putting it together, and explain in general summary what the legislation would do, or at least do better than current law.

I might begin by saying that I am very familiar with the K.S.A. 39-1101 body of statutes. I have been involved with any work which has been done on these statutes over the past 20 years.

When we last amended these statutes, in the late 1980s, we thought we had covered every type of assistance dog possible, and every possible situation where a person who has a disability might need to use such a dog. Expansion and advances in both dog training, and in the numbers of people who have severe disabilities but who choose to live in their home communities instead of in institutionalization, however, have created the need for greater specificity in the law.

Also the adoption of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) at the federal level has probably complicated assistance dog access more than it has improved the situation. This is because the language about assistance animals under Title III of the ADA is very general. It does not define how much training is required for a dog to have public access rights under the law, or what kind of specific things the dog must do for its handler to qualify as guidance or assistance. The Department of Justice has had some meetings with a national coalition of assistance dog users and training organizations to attempt to begin a regulatory process to provide definition of what the ADA means when it addresses access of service animals, but this process is moving extremely slowly, and generally the Department of Justice, at this point, is encouraging States to address these issues.

At the same time, users of trained and qualified assistance dogs are concerned about abuses because of the general nature of the ADA provisions about assistance animals. There have been numerous reported

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Atch #3

incidences of individuals faking disabilities and/or mis-representing the training of a dog or animal just for the purposes of getting their pet dog or animal into a public environment. This has created suspicion on the parts of proprietors and employees working in public accommodations, and has caused long experienced guide, service, and hearing assistance dog users to be questioned and challenged about public access for their dogs much more than was the case prior to the creation of the very general language in the ADA.

Additionally, a sad but increasing trend has been for vandals and criminal elements of our society to attack or abuse assistance dogs, or to injure assistance dogs in the course of committing a crime against the person of the dog handler. Damaging a highly trained assistance dog currently carries a punishment no greater than damaging a stray dog who has taken up residence in the local junkyard. Trained guide, service, or hearing assistance dogs often have \$10,000.00 to \$20,000.00 invested in their training by the time they are placed with their handlers. The sudden loss of use of such a dog can negatively impact the independence, and often employability, of a person who has a severe disability for an extended period of time. Although incidences of such crimes remain thankfully rare, they do occur, and both Missouri and Washington State have seen fit to adopt laws establishing specific penalties for harming a qualified assistance dog. The Washington State statutes were used as a base in drafting the Kansas statutes proposed in this bill.

This bill is a model of compromise, communication, and joint effort. Any of you who have served on this Committee for several sessions will recall that you have seen two other bills attempting to update assistance dog access statutes in Kansas. Various participants in the drafting of 2715 worked on these previous attempts, but you saw the efforts disintegrate into disagreement and splits among the disabled community and various types of dog users. Those who proposed the previous bills were well meaning, but it is a very complex endeavor to protect the rights of those persons who have disabilities to use qualified, well trained dog assistance in public areas, while also protecting the public from having poorly trained dogs injected into public accommodations by non-disabled individuals who are using the law as a rouse to procure pet access. Drafting of statutes to better define this fine line has been extremely tedious. After discussing the manner in which the previous two bill attempts on this subject came out, even some of those who were initially supporting those legislative attempts ended up opposing them. This time, we brought all of the parties together who had concerns about the two previous bills, and all had an opportunity to work on the proposed statutes you have before you. Consensus did not always come easy, but it was eventually reached making 2715 a bill which has wide spread support.

The following is a list of specific enhancements to current law made by the legislation:

- \* Expansion of the "service dog" definition, and addition of the "therapeutic support dog" definition. Insures that seizure control dogs are included. These are dogs who can sense when a handler who has epilepsy is in danger of having a seizure. The dog either warns the handler of an oncoming seizure so the handler can get to safety, or in some cases, the dog can head off the seizure. If a seizure does occur, the dog can assist the handler while consciousness and functionality are regained.
- \* Provisions are added to allow persons with mental or emotional disabilities to use therapeutic support dogs. A standard is set by the proposed law; however, to note that a mentally disabled handler must be determined to have the skills and capabilities to care for a therapeutic support dog.
- \* The proposed statute establishes other animals may not have the same status as one of the categories of assistance dogs. This is necessary because abuses have occurred, including in the State of Kansas, where individuals have attempted to, for example, gain admission to public places of a snake or ferret, claiming that the presence of the animal helps them remain focused.
- \* The proposed statutes establish quite clearly that a dog or animal used for comfort, protection, or personal defense, does NOT qualify for protection as an assistance dog or animal in any category.
- \* Provisions would be added to State Law by the Bill to increase the penalties for harming an assistance dog, or for interfering with its use.

- \* The proposed statutes set forth limited access rights for professional therapy dogs when accompanied by qualified handlers. These are dogs who work with people who are disabled in institutional, school, or other structured settings. The issue is for these dogs to be able, with their handlers, to travel to and from their workplaces using public transportation, and to be able to stay in temporary lodging facilities such as hotels and motels with their handlers. This category of dog is not given full public access by the proposed law.

There are some issues where Legislators expect to see people representing differing political views and factions fight it out in front of legislative committees. The Legislators want to witness this process so they can decide, after watching the battle, who is right and who is wrong. There are other issues, however, where Legislators seem to hold advocates and lobbyists to a higher standard. They want disagreements between all interests worked out before they see a version of a Bill in Committee hearings. Legislators seem to hold updating assistance dog access provisions to this higher standard. They have expressed willingness to sample the final product of the sausage, but they did not want to see it made. I believe the disability advocacy community has met the higher standard. We have worked quietly outside the hog pin to create the sausage out of sight, but enough of this analogy! We are concerned with dog access, not hog access, and we have worked very hard to bring forward a bill which all interested groups find palatable. We ask you to report it favorably



GUIDE DOG USEERS OF KANSAS

Ann Byington, President

testimony on H.B. 2715

As President of Guide Dog Users of Kansas, I am writing in support of this proposed legislation. Through the work of Morris Frank of the Seeing eye and many others, Guide Dogs have a proud heritage of outstanding training, performance, and behavior in public places to which other dogs have not been granted access. For the past few years, attempts have been made to broaden these hard-won access rights. This bill is the first step in defining the rights of access to properly trained dogs and their handlers to include dogs whose functions are not as obviously or easily understood. It also attempts to offer the business-owner some latitude for questioning the dog-handler regarding which physical task the dog performs to mitigate a disability.

I can cite several examples of perrrsons seeking access to malls, restaurants, and other public places whose dogs appeared to have little or no training, but because the person alleged a disability, the business-owner was reluctant to refuse admittance to the dog and handler. Even though observation revealed either a lack of obvious disability of the handler, or a definite lack of training for the dog, the facility manager feared bad press or some sort of reprisal. Such situations create a danger to the public who are subject to improperly controled dog, a danger to other guide or service dog users who assume that their dogs will not be put at risk by other animals and a clear violation of the intent, if not the letter of current access statutes.

I know of other situations where persons bring dogs into public places alleging that they are trainers of guide/service dogs. All too often, the dog is merely a pet which is being brought into a public place with no real need to be there, except the wish of its owner. Historically, dogs in training are usually attired in a cape which carries a logo to that affect.

H.B. 2715 defines the function of guide, service and hearing dogs, as well as the more nebulous therapy support dogs. It allows professionals, i.e., occupational and physical therapists, and other professionals who utilize therapy dogs as a part of their work the same rights of access as persons with disabilities who use these dogs. Further, the legislation provides some punitive damages to those who interfere with, injure or kill such guide/service dogs.

As a guide dog user for the past 22 years, I am well aware of the responsibilities attendant on anyone bringing a dog into public places. I know that this legislation will serve as a beginning to allow persons with other disabilities the same opportunities, as well as obliging them to adhere to the same high standards of training, performance and

HsHHS  
2-11-02  
Atch #4

**HB 2715**  
**February 11, 2002**

I'd like to thank Chairman Boston and the committee for allowing me this opportunity to present certain facts as I know them concerning assistance dogs. Important issues exist which must be addressed in constructing an effective version of HB2715.

My name is Lois Young, and I live in Osawatomie, Kansas. I represent myself on this issue.

HB 2715 is the beginning of an effective bill, and I ask that you consider these needs:

1. In the new section 1, the definition must be clear as to what constitutes a "specially trained and tested" dog or animal. Without a clear definition, none of the other rules have a strong foundation to rest on.
2. That an accreditation bureau be formed to perform testing and registration of each dog or animal. All responsibility for issuing training permits, certifying the training and issuing credentials and identification of the animal and trainer will be with this department.
3. That the owner of assistance animals have a current Doctor's prescription stating the need for an assistance animal.
4. That the bill be very clear on who can be a trainer. I understand the current bill to read that trainers are to be from a recognized training center. Can a private individual train an assistance animal? If so, the bill needs to state that the trainer needs a permit to do so, covering a specific period of time. 16 States have such requirements for trainers.
5. That some form of identification be issued by the accreditation board and be on the animal or with the handler at all times. 27 states require that the animal wear a special collar, harness or leash issued by a department of certification, or they require that the animal wear an ID tag or the owner carry credentials showing the animal has been tested and certified.

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2-11-02  
Atch#5

There is a great need for improving the Kansas Statutes on assistance animals. I personally know people who were caught in an unfortunate encounter with the deficiencies in the current law. They were landlords who had a long-term tenant. The tenant acquired a large, aggressive dog. Neighbors had reported that the dog, while chained to a leash, often growled and lunged at them. It had on occasion, broken it's heavy chain and lunged toward them as they tried to get into their home.

The landlords learned that their liability insurance coverage would be of little value to them unless they took such steps as a "normal, prudent" person would to reduce or eliminate undo risk. So, the landlords asked their tenant to make other arrangements for the dog. Within weeks, the landlords were contacted by the Kansas Human Rights Commission (KHRC) stating the dog was a hearing assistance dog, and that they were denying a disabled person the right to have an assistance dog. This shocked the landlords, because they had rented to this person for several years and had no knowledge that an assistance dog was needed. When they asked about the dog's training, the KHRC stated that the owner had trained the dog. The KHRC told the landlords that Kansas didn't have any laws that required hearing assistance dogs to be certified or documented as trained. The landlords were caught between the requirements of their insurance providers and the vague laws pertaining to assistance dogs. They were formally charged with discrimination against their tenant under the Kansas Act Against Discrimination.

It was a financially draining, health damaging, 8-month nightmare for the landlords.

It could have been avoided if the Kansas laws pertaining to assistance animals were more specific. There were the following problems:

1. No clear definitions of assistance dogs.
2. No rules on whom could train assistance dogs.
3. No rules requiring proof that this dog was trained and registered.
4. No rules requiring the owner be issued credentials to prove the dog's validity as a hearing assistance dog.
5. No rules requiring proof that a person needs an assistance dog.

I believe these guidelines would benefit those using assistance animals, as well as everyone else. During the past few years, I have spoken to several people through email who use assistance dogs. Most of them view laws that validate their use and need as positive for them. It would help eliminate the problem of those who impersonate as assistance dog users or trainers.

I realize that requiring a person to obtain a permit to train and having to have an assistance animal tested will take some effort, and it places more responsibility on the handler and the animal. We all have rules to conform to. We must be trained and tested to get a driver's license, to get a hunting license, to practice medicine or law. I don't believe having these requirements for assistance animals should be viewed differently.

Thank you for listening. I hope my information will be helpful to you. I will be glad to assist the committee in any way in forming a good bill.

Lois Young  
115 14<sup>th</sup> Street  
Osawatomie, KS 66064  
913-755-4730



**Sarah Holbert, CEO**

**Ty Fleshman, Adult Services Director**

**Megan Lewellyn, Canine Assistance  
Director**

**Amanda Roetman, Endowment  
Coordinator**

**Michelle Sedlacek, CCCC Work Study**



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February 11, 2002

Chairman Boston and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

I would like to thank you on behalf of the CARES staff and it's Board of Directors for hearing testimony on HB 2715. I would also like to sincerely thank Rep. Joann Freeborn for her loyal support toward our efforts as well as sponsoring HB 2715.

CARES began placing canine assistants with persons in 1994. Since that time we have placed over 260 assistance dogs in 23 different states, one in Puerto Rico and two in Peru. 141 of these placements are service dogs and hearing dogs. 57% of our placements work here in the state of Kansas.

We have 13 seizure alert dogs, 5 in KS & 8 in 6 different states; we have 104 professional therapy dogs, 73 in KS & 29 in 5 different states & 2 in Peru; we have 22 therapeutic support dogs, 14 in KS & 8 in 6 different states. We project that in 2002 CARES will place their 300<sup>th</sup> team. While we are not the largest training facility, we have placed a large number of dogs in specific areas of disabilities that are not being addressed by other schools in the United States. Follow-up to the original team placement is a constant challenge. However, we have found that in the above canine assistance, areas follow-up work beyond the norm is usually not necessary. There are not any more concerns after placement in one area over the other. In fact, professional therapy dogs, for instance, are used and maintained at such a high level of excellence, because the majority of their use is in school settings where it is imperative that they demonstrate outstanding manners. This is not only a concern in school but for all assistance dogs working in and with the public.

HsHHS  
2-11-02  
Atch #6

Because of the willingness of the following organizations to participate in the preliminary construction of this bill;

Byington Advocacy Consultants of Kansas  
CARES, Inc.  
Guide Dog Users of Kansas  
Kansas Advocacy & Protective Services (KAPS)  
Kansas Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired, Inc. (KABVI)  
Kansas Commission of Disability concerns  
Midwest Canine Assistance Inc. (KSDS)  
Statewide Independent Living Council of Kansas (SILCK)  
Topeka Independent Living Resource Center

national organizations, as well as federal agencies, are very interested in the results brought about the collaboration between the state of Kansas and the above organizations. These groups have worked together to bring the possibility of sound and fundamental disability centered legislation to the citizens. The passing of this bill will bring that hard work to fruition. It is quite possible that the precedent that Kansas sets with legislation will have an impact on what happens with future ADA and Dept. of Housing policies as well as interpretation of those policies by the Dept. of Justice. Groups have met on the national level to try to accomplish the very bill that you have in front of you.

Public access, protection under the law, as well as the ability to punish violators, will give Kansas citizens working with assistance dogs the assurance that the partnerships they have with their dogs will have been given every consideration by the people chosen to represent them in Topeka.

In the last six months we have received more complaints about canine assistance teams being denied public access than ever before. Many businesses are willing to "risk" telling a person they cannot bring their dog into their business, because there is not enough incentive for them to comply with the state law and the threat of federal involvement is almost non-existent. The ADA at this point has such a "gray area" regarding "service animals" that only through the court system will we finally know what is going to be considered acceptable under that federal legislation.

A major step forward will be the passing of the bill. The next step will be the education of our prosecutors, law enforcement officers, our attorneys and the general public.

We would like to ask you to amend the wording of the current bill to include the word "selected" in the following places:

New Section 1, (a) "Guide dog" means a dog which has been specially **selected**, trained... (b) "Service dog" means a dog which has been specially **selected**, trained.... (c) "Hearing Assistance dog means a dog which is specially **selected**, trained....(d) "Therapeutic Support dog" means a dog which is specially **selected**, trained....(e) "assistance animal" includes dogs....other animals specially **selected**, trained and tested....

Thank you so much, for considering our proposals and hearing our testimony on the change in the current legislation. To work within our system of democracy is a right that I truly feel honored and privileged to be a part of.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Holbert".

Sarah Holbert, CEO



# KANSAS

Bill Graves  
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES  
*Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns*

Richard E. Beyer  
Secretary

*Mission Statement: The Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns believes that all people with disabilities are entitled to be equal citizens and equal partners in Kansas society*

**Testimony To House Health and Human Services Committee  
Monday, February 11, 2002  
by Sharon Huffman, Legislative Liaison**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2715. The Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns (KCDC) is an advisory commission that provides information and education to the legislature and governor on issues of importance to Kansans with disabilities. The purpose of KCDC is to involve all segments of the Kansas community through legislative advocacy, education and resource networking to ensure full and equal citizenship for all Kansans with disabilities.

As part of the group that helped draft this bill, KCDC would like to go on record as being supporters of this bill. This bill is designed to help clarify some of the definitions of various animals used by people with disabilities for support and/or therapy. It also enacts a penalty for interference, abuse, injury or death of such animals. HB 2715 extends the current protection from discrimination under Kansas Law for persons with disabilities who use such animals to include acquisition and use of rental, residential housing and in the purchase and use of residential housing.

KCDC believes that the provisions of this bill will help to ensure full and equal citizenship for Kansans with disabilities that use guide dogs, service dogs, hearing assistance dogs, therapeutic support dogs and assistance animals.

Thank you for allowing me to testify before you today.