

Dear Senate Government Efficiency Committee Members,

Please support HB 2240. This is necessary due to several recent KDADS proposed changes that would throw the IDD system in Kansas into chaos.

The “Unbundling” change specifically would be devastating to many with disabilities, including my 33 year old son Chris who has Down Syndrome.

Chris struggled with mental health issues for 6 years after graduating school and on the waiting list to get funding. Being able to work at the Goodwill Industries of Kansas “Skill Development Adult Day Program” has been life changing, providing the structure he flourished in during his school years. He received the 2022 Achiever of the Year Award, and gained independence allowing him to successfully move into a residential services setting, which he proudly calls his apartment.

KDADS original “Unbundling” proposal would allow Chris just 6 more months working at Goodwill. Because of his lower skill level, he would then be deemed unemployable in the “community”, and be let go.

Businesses enter into job contracts with Goodwill SPECIFICALLY so individuals like Chris can experience employment. Chris loves and is proud of his job and above minimum wage paycheck. He leaves his apartment to go to his workplace surrounded by his work team, just like anyone else without a disability goes to their workplace. Unbundling is basically saying the job you’re so proud of doesn’t matter because it’s not out in the “community”.

KDADS defends the change as being “more personalized and flexible, tailored to individual needs and goals and enhance choice”. It literally does the exact opposite and eliminates the choices that individuals have already made to experience success.

Because of recent advocacy and invaluable legislative oversight, KDADS has begun being responsive with a new workgroup addressing the many concerns of families and professionals. The amended language in HB 2240 will ensure KDADS continues to be responsive now as well as in the future to public concerns. Your support for HB 2240 will prevent dire situations like we are in now from occurring again.

Respectfully,

Pat Leon

Wichita

