

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2395

March 20, 2013

Honorable Clark Schultz and Members of the House Insurance Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to appear before you today, in favor of HB 2395.

I am Representative Sydney Carlin, in my 6th term in the Kansas House. I became interested in Autism when the 3 year old across the street from my house was diagnosed in about 1999; long before I came to this position. After many long discussions with the family I learned how their lives were affected by this child. At this time it was still a pretty rare disease in many respects but, now one in 88 babies are born with Autism.

I supported past efforts to help the families with autistic children with the passage of the state employee pilot project in 2011. In this project, children with Autism could receive behavioral therapy through the state's Blue Cross Blue Shield plan and we would then use that study as a baseline cost for insurance.

A year later my niece, Nikki, had a baby that began to exhibit problem behaviors. As she matured she appeared to me to be blind and deaf—as she did not look at me or respond to my voice. You will hear from her mother (and grandmother). Every story is unique but we do know that intervention at the earliest time possible is paramount in helping these children become healthy, productive citizens of the future.

I thank you for your interest in this issue and will be available for questions at the appropriate time.