



EQUALITY ♦ LAW ♦ JUSTICE

Disability Rights Center of Kansas

214 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 100 ♦ Topeka, KS 66603

Phone: 785.273.9661 ♦ Toll Free: 1.877.776.1541

Toll Free TDD: 1.877.335.3725 ♦ Fax: 785-273-9414

www.drckansas.org info@drckansas.org

Written-Only Testimony in Support of SB 85

Senate Federal and State Affairs

February 16, 2017

Chairman LaTurner and members of the committee:

My name is Mike Burgess. I am the Director of Policy & Outreach at the Disability Rights Center of Kansas (DRC). DRC is a public interest legal advocacy organization that is part of a national network of federally mandated organizations empowered to advocate for Kansans with disabilities. DRC is the officially designated protection and advocacy system in Kansas. DRC is a private, 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, organizationally independent of state government and whose sole interest is the protection of the legal rights of Kansans with disabilities.

DRC would like to thank you for the opportunity to offer our support for SB 85 (Simon's Law).

Disability is a natural part of the human condition. It is not to be feared, ridiculed, or pitied. It should not be looked down upon or have someone wondering why anyone want to live like that.

What is a life worth living? That is not a question that should be answered by a health care provider. It should be exclusively left to wishes of the patient or as in this case the parents or legal decision makers.

The provisions of this bill, while commonsense, are unfortunately very necessary to ensure children with disabilities are not subject to the withholding of life-sustaining procedures, food, medication, or nutrition.

Thank you for your time and attention. I would be happy to follow up with the committee at a later time if anyone should have any questions.