



Topeka Independent Living Resource Center

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February 13, 2017

Senate Committee on Public Health & Welfare
Senator Vicki Schmidt, Chair

Testimony in Support of SB 153 by:
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The Topeka Independent Living Resource Center (TILRC) is a federally funded Center for Independent Living (CIL) and is a civil and human rights organization. Our mission is to advocate for justice, equality and essential services for a fully integrated and accessible society for all people with disabilities. TILRC has been providing cross-age, cross-disability advocacy and services for over 30 years to people with disabilities across the state of Kansas. Our agency has been particularly interested in and committed to assuring that people who require long term services and supports have access to information, services and supports that offer choices; choices that promote freedom, independent lifestyles and dignity, including the dignity of risk. TILRC is owned, managed and operated by people with disabilities.

Topeka Independent Living Resource Center (TILRC) supports Senate Bill 153. It would return Targeted Case Management (TCM) to the Medicaid Waiver recipients. Requiring this valuable service to be provided by community agencies that do not otherwise provide any HCBS services eliminates any past conflict of interest issues and re-connects Waiver recipients to local, community agencies that have a deep breadth of knowledge about related services, supports & opportunities that exist for Waiver recipients, but that are woefully under-utilized under the current MCO Care-Coordination systems. An additional point worth noting is that often these local community services, supports and opportunities are available free of charge to the individual.

Senate Public Health and Welfare

Advocacy and services provided by and for people

Date 2/13/17

Attachment 2017

TILRC provides a variety of services including assistance with finding housing that is affordable and accessible to people with disabilities, assistance with transportation, including learning how to use available transportation, skills building, learning self-care, assistance with medical equipment including wheelchairs, walkers, canes and so on (We have a variety of these devices donated to us and available free-of-charge). TILRC assists people with relocating their place residence and also with transitioning from nursing facilities and institutions. TILRC also provides peer support so people can talk through problems or issues with another person with a disability that has experienced and successfully dealt with similar issues. TILRC also assists with applications, paperwork, appeals and Social Security applications and appeals. TILRC assists with recreation and socialization, critical areas that are often overlooked. Finally, TILRC has a summer employment and intern program for youth with disabilities that teaches valuable work-related skills and improves the confidence of young disabled folks to succeed in adult life. This is just a partial list of services and supports available to individuals from our federal grant.

Since TCM was eliminated, referrals from MCOs for these services are basically zero. This makes no sense in tight budget times to not be maximizing available community services and supports that are not part of the Medicaid budget and that are free to the individual; not to say this is a panacea. There is a finite limit to our resources. However, we have a lot more capacity for accepting referrals and serving folks than is currently the case.

When TILRC provided TCM, we were able to directly link Waiver recipients to our services and supports as well as those provided by other community organizations and agencies. TILRC also was able to better follow along with Waiver beneficiaries so that they didn't get "lost" when they changed addresses (a frequent occurrence) and keep our eyes on individuals that may be struggling in some fashion. This lost linkage needs to return. Waiver recipients would be better served. Resources would better utilized and coordinated and, importantly, person-centered outcomes for Waiver recipients would improve.

It is for all of these reasons that I ask you to please report SB 153 out favorably.

Thank you for your time and attention.