

TARC Industries



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February 7, 2018

To: Committee on Public Health & Welfare
From: Shelby Fry, TARC Industries/Employment Services Director
Re: Written Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 332

TARC is a not-for-profit organization established in 1954 that provides services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities within Shawnee County. At TARC Industries/Employment Services (TIES), the work training, job coaching, and job placement division of TARC, we strive to provide opportunities for those with disabilities to earn income either through direct community job placement, or at our work training program at TARC Industries.

Like members of this committee, I have been called to service and have fulfilled this calling for twenty-two years at TARC. As the Director of TIES, I have witnessed first-hand the ever-changing ebb and flow of how services are delivered. For those of us who's mission it is to assist individuals in seeking, obtaining and maintaining employment, we know firsthand the necessity of working within a system that is flexible and understanding of the extreme uniqueness that is employment services. This inherent need for flexibility is in direct contrast to a medically-based model of service delivery.

The medical model of service delivery does not account for the ever present, relatively unchanging, needs of services of those with an intellectual or developmental disability. TARC has been a long-term provider of employment services and with that experience I can say with certainty that the needs for follow-along employment supports will almost always be present. There is no prescription or one-size-fits-all approach to job coaching. There is no magic plan that will fit all individuals. As an example, TARC is currently

TARC Industries' Mission

TARC Industries is a non-profit production facility that provides employment opportunities and work related experiences for persons with developmental disabilities.

serving two gentlemen who have worked for over twenty years each within their community. To this day, because of their support needs, we continue to provide daily job coaching services. We have attempted to fade service delivery and we have attempted to implement "natural work supports". Time after time it was necessary for job coaching supports to be put back in place. The very nature of their disability requires constant professional intervention that cannot be found by enlisting the aid of co-workers. But for over twenty years each, both gentleman have outlasted many other co-workers, managers, and even corporate structure changes. This is possible due to flexible service options that allow providers to make changes instantly to address issues.

The medical model currently in use promised extra services to address employment issues and these have largely been unavailable to general service providers and TARC has not benefited by any of the "extra" programs that have been discussed. What the medical model has accomplished is extra layers of administrative costs. Instead of being able to invest in additional job coaches or employment specialists, the need for administrative positions and duties have increased to deal with the new issues that the model brought to providers. This current system is simply not designed to support creativity, flexibility or affording providers the funding necessary to invest in complex services like employment placement.

On behalf of TARC, I thank you for your continued support of organizations like ours and we thank you for your consideration of SB 332.

Sincerely,



Shelby Fry

TARC Industries/Employment Services Director