



## Disability Planning Organization of Kansas

February 3, 2017

Dear Senator Chairperson Carolyn McGinn and Committee Members,

Disability Planning Organization of Kansas (DPOK) is the local Community Developmental Disability Organization (CDDO) for 9 counties in North Central Kansas. We serve over 700 people with an additional 150 people on the waiting list for services.

I am writing to request your consideration of SB173 and subsequent support for people with disabilities, their families, and the community service organizations that provide those valuable services.

There has not been a rate increase since 2008. For the past 8 years, the IDD system has continued to serve more people with fewer resources. The lack of rate adjustments, coupled with the failure of KanCare, has created a very unstable system.

Stability is critical in creating the best communities in Kansas so we all may be able to live and work, including people with disabilities.

As a CDDO, the quality of supports and services received by persons with disabilities from a Community Service Provider is directly related to their ability to recruit well qualified, well trained staff. The lack of funding increases does not afford this to providers and we must redirect our attention to funding an adequate and reasonable service system for people with disabilities.

This past year our catchment area in north-central Kansas experienced its first provider since 1996 being unable to serve any new person because of their inability to recruit and retain direct support staff.

As a CDDO, a large part of our job is to work with providers to assure a strong local network. We believe the aforementioned things have contributed to a dramatic weakening of that system.

DPOK has not received a single request from a new provider to join our network in over a year.

Please bring back to Kansas, and to people with disabilities and their families, a stable, quality model of services by increasing reimbursement rates through the phased-in approach of SB173.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

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