

Support Testimony from a DeafBlind Individual

*Regarding SSP (Support Services Provider) under SB 185's
Communication Access Services provision*

From: Fred Foshag Jr <fcfoshag@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 1:14 PM
To: Robert Cooper [DCF] <Robert.Cooper@ks.gov>
Subject: House Education Committee (HEC). SB 185

Dear Mr. Cooper,

I am writing in support of the subject legislation because an SSP would be of help to me by assisting with identifying and marking clothing, cleaning supplies, and other items. An SSP would help in taking me walking as my husband is 76 and has had polio and cannot walk long distances. An SSP could also help with taking me to appointments at health care facilities, meetings, training sessions, etc.

I am 73 with Usher syndrome, am totally blind with two CIs. I have always been hard of hearing. My loss of sight progressed to the point I could no longer work as a nurse in about 1985. I then obtained a post-master's degree in Social Work and worked 20 years until I had to retire with a disability at 62. I had minimal training for dealing with loss of sight and hearing until after I retired. Since, I have spent some time at the Helen Keller National Center, as well as have had some training at home. Even so, I still need a lot of assistance with daily living an SSP could provide. An SSP will help me continue doing the activities I enjoy as book discussion groups, volunteering, walking, etc.

I know there are a lot of other blind individuals with less training that I have had who are hidden in their homes, and who could greatly use the assistance of an SSP to improve the quality of their lives. An SSP would also help get such individuals transition back into society.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the benefits of SSPs helping individuals such as I in their day to day living.

Sincerely,

Ellen M Foshag
Pittsburg, KS

PS, I recommend you and the committee watch the recent movie re the deaf blind individual called "Feeling Through". Its an excellent 11 min movie showing a segment of the life of a deaf blind person.