



**An independent voice for
those served by KanCare.**

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Members of the House Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to add our support to HB 2345/The Supported Decision-Making Agreements Act

The KanCare Advocates Network (KAN) is a coalition of more than 50 organizations who advocate on behalf of and serve the 400,000 Kansans who depend upon the Kansas Medicaid program, KanCare, and its seven Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver programs for their health care and long-term supports and services. We are among the four largest coalitions in Kansas representing older adults, children, persons with disabilities and mental health needs and providers of health care and long term supports and services.

Too often guardianship is viewed as the only option causing people to be unnecessarily placed under the restrictions of a guardian who has sole control over the person and their major life decisions. Supported decision making provides an additional option which can empower older adults and those with disabilities to make their own decisions with individualized assistance from people they trust and allows them to retain their legal rights and dignity. Unlike a guardian, supported decision making lets people with disabilities have more people in their support system.

HB 2345 has broad and strong support within our KAN partners. Many people use informal supported decision making without having written agreements. Older adults and adults with disabilities should have the legally recognized right to make their own decisions with the help friends or family members they trust. Unlike guardianship, supported decision making gives them that right.

HB 2345 provides clear legal authority and process and mirrors a growing national consensus from stakeholders calling for supported decision-making legislation. Passing this legislation adds Kansas to the 27 other states that give people with disabilities and older adults an alternative to guardianship.

We ask you to join us in supporting HB 2345 by passing it out of committee. Thank you.

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