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Testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2609
PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Proponent
ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written Only

Dear Chair and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony for HB 2609, Enacting the Supported Decision Making Act.

I am a parent to a wonderful fourteen year old son, Danny. Danny is in the 8th grade, loves school, and is particularly interested in science and politics. Danny is also disabled. He has cerebral palsy and epilepsy. Danny uses a wheelchair to get around and is non-speaking. However, he has a lot to say and he is performing at grade level in his school work.

As Danny has grown and is approaching adulthood, we have become increasingly interested in a model of support for Danny outside of guardianship. Danny participates to the fullest extent possible in all aspects of his life. We strive to give him choices daily and he is accustomed to being consulted and making decisions on issues big and small. He deserves and has a right to make all of his choices in the future. However, due to the current limitations with his ability to communicate, he will likely always need a parent or trusted advisor to communicate his wants, needs, and plans in his future.

We see ourselves as Danny's advocates and in the future, we want to be his partner. We do not want him to lose his ability to vote, to make decisions about where he lives, or what care he receives. Danny is fully capable of doing this with the structured support available through a Supported Decision Making Model.

Please carefully consider and support HB 2609, Enacting the Supported Decision Making Act. For people like Danny, it is a critical part of preserving their rights while getting the help they need.

Thank you for your Time and Consideration.

Regards,
Laura Robeson
Prairie Village, Kansas