



February 12, 2025

House Committee on Judiciary

Opponent Testimony for HB2359

*(KCDD would adjust to a Proponent, if our Amendment were Adopted)*

**Chair Humphries and Members of the Committee:**

The purpose of the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities (KCDD) is to support people of all ages with developmental disabilities so they have the opportunity to make choices regarding both their participation in society and their quality of life. Our mission is to empower individuals with I/DD and their families to lead systems change, build capacity, and advocate for inclusive, integrated, and accessible communities where everyone belongs and thrives. We believe that all people with I/DD should be able to live, learn, work, play, and belong in the community they choose.

KCDD is dedicated to advocating for policies that promote independence, self-determination, and full inclusion of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). We support initiatives that guarantee the rights of individuals while ensuring they have access to the support they need in order to thrive in their communities. We collaborate with policymakers, state agencies, self-advocates, and families to identify and address societal barriers that limit the ability of individuals with I/DD to make their own choices and participate fully in their communities.

We are here today to advocate for a critically important amendment to fix fatal flaws in this bill regarding end-of-life powers of Kansas guardians. We are joined in support of this amendment by Kansans for Life, the Kansas Catholic Conference, Disability Rights of Kansas, the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities and the Big Tent Coalition (which is the longest-standing disability coalition made up of dozens of organizations from across the aging and disability spectrum). We understand this amendment is currently being drafted by your hard-working Revisor of Statutes, and we have been told that it will be ready by the time the Committee works this bill.

These amendments represent a significant step towards ensuring the safety, rights, and dignity of Kansans with I/DD. By prioritizing these amendments, we can make sure that individuals always have a voice on decisions that are being made that impact their lives. At KCDD, we believe that guardianship should never be the default solution. These amendments reinforce the idea that people with disabilities deserve the same rights and opportunities to direct their own lives as any other Kansan.

We urge the committee to pass these amendments and continue working towards a more equitable, fair, and just system.

Sincerely,

*Whit Downing*

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