

Approved: February 10, 2011
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE

JANUARY 25, 2011

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kiegerl at 9 a.m. on January 25, 2011, in Room 142S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Martha Dorsey, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Jay Hall, Intern, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Renaë Jefferies, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
June Christensen, Committee Assistant

Others attending: See attached list.

Conferees Appearing before the Committee:

Jane Rhys, Executive Director, Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities
Jim Leiker, President and CEO, Easter Seals, Capper Foundation
Kathy Lobb, Self Advocate Coalition of Kansas
Matt Fletcher, InterHab

Chairperson Kiegerl reiterated that the purpose of the committee is to help children get off the Developmental Disability (DD) waiting list. He introduced Representative Bill Otto, Kids of Kansas, to present proposed bills.

Mr. Otto reviewed three proposed bills from last year's session: 1) Not to allow children to be removed from the parents' home unless the parents have been convicted of a crime or are mentally incompetent and not to lose permanent rights unless it is voluntary; 2) A proposed bill to not allow those who are temporarily homeless to have their children removed for that reason; 3) A proposed bill that allows judges to use discretion regarding the ability to accept or reject a social worker's recommendation for removal from the home or having alternate placement. He said that often the social worker is a recent college graduate and may not know all the circumstances of the case. There were no objections to allowing these bills to come before the Committee.

Representative Phil Hermanson presented a proposed bill, the *Protective Parent Reform Act*, that would allow more investigation before a child is taken from the home. Kansas removes more children than any other state, and the purpose of the bill would reduce children intake. There were no objections to allow the bill to come before the Committee.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice chairperson Wolf moved and Representative Rubin seconded a motion to approve the January 13, and January 18, 2011, minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

TESTIMONY

Jane Rhys, Executive Director of Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities, presented testimony, (Attachment 1) noting that her organization is federally funded and would not be asking for state monies. She invited members to attend the Big Tent Reception that will be held

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Room 142S, Statehouse, 9 a.m., January 25, 2011

from 5-7 p.m. tonight. She cited the benefits that would happen for clients if KNI and the Parsons facilities are closed if the funding is used for in-home care. She answered several questions regarding community response, adequate housing, and zoning requirements to place clients in the community.

James Leiker, President and CEO of the Easter Seals Capper Foundation, said Capper Foundation is celebrating its 90-year anniversary this year, having been founded in 1920 by Arthur Capper, United States Senator for 30 years. He presented testimony ([Attachment 2](#)) regarding the issues of unfunded services that impact Kansas children and families. He introduced Ms. Debby O'Neill, Vice President of Programs and Services, and Ms. Linda Burgen, Director of Kidlink Childcare and Preschool Program and Director of Autism Services Program. Ms. O'Neill told the story of Sophia, whose disability is not covered under Medicaid, so her services are limited to two hours yearly. Ms. Burgen related Ryan's Story, a young child who was not selected in the Autism Waiver lottery selection, and was unable to receive services. He soon will age-out of the system, and his parents were unable to continue private-pay costs after 33 days. Both children had shown improvement. Both presenters urged the Committee to increase available services so that these children can continue to receive help. Mr. Leiker concluded by saying that services are very inadequate and that the 2007 legislation that was passed is only serving about 45 Kansas children with another 270 on the waiting list.

Kathy Lobb, a representative of the Self Advocate Coalition of Kansas, gave testimony ([Attachment 3](#)) urging the Committee to take steps to eliminate the waiting list. She said she is a person with developmental disability and has a part-time job, is a homeowner, a community member, and a taxpayer. She encouraged them to make this possible for others with disabilities.

Matt Fletcher, Associate Director, InterHab, presented additional testimony ([Attachment 4](#)) and reviewed its services. He noted that [House Substitute Bill 2671 for SB 365 \(2008\)](#) will provide home- and community-based services at a savings. He reported that the wages of those serving the state as compared with the federal are less and possibly contributed to around a 50 percent turnover in staff. He also encouraged adequate funding to be used from the closure of the two hospitals.

The Case for Inclusion, 2010 An Analysis of Medicaid for Americans with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, ([Attachment 5](#)) was distributed.

The next meeting will be held Thursday, January 27, 2011, at 9 a.m., Room 142S.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.