

February 20, 2013

To: Brian Weber, Chair and
Members of the House Social Service Budget Committee

From: Jim Rice, Seward County Commissioner

Re: HB 2029

First, I want you to know that I appreciate the time and effort you put forth in this committee. The social services budget is one of the most grueling processes in the legislature and I commend you.

The Seward Co. Commission believes so strongly about carving out long term care services for the developmental disabilities (I/DD) population that we signed and submitted to the Governor a joint resolution along with 50+ other counties encouraging him to remove I/DD long term care services from the KanCare model. As a county government official, I have a level of responsibility for these people and the services they receive and they must not be compromised. The Seward County commission believes the system already in place works efficiently and utilizes effectively the taxpayers' dollars on an already lean budget.

It is my understanding, because rates for these long term care services are capped per day, per person based on their severity of disability, there is no significant cost savings to the state by including I/DD long term care services in KanCare, so why fix something that is not broken? How is it possible to save the state money by moving these dollars to three for-profit, out of state insurance companies?

Knowing that one of the State's largest budgets have been placed in the hands of three insurance companies who have zero experience with providing long term care services, I am extremely concerned with the idea how the State seems to think these entities could possibly make these services better or more efficient than the system that has been working great for years. The long term care services provided in my county are not medical services, they are life services, helping people live independently so they can become employable and contributing members of their community. Including I/DD services in KanCare is NOT a good fit. As a county commissioner, I do NOT want to see these services tampered with.

The cost of administration of the Kansas I/DD system is an amazingly low 3% and per-person costs in the Kansas I/DD system have remained largely static for the past twenty years. Can you imagine the cost that is going to be associated with providers billing 3 different entities who each have 3 different transportation contracts, and who all have different compliance terms? This is a huge concern for me and our tax payers.

We are also very concerned about inevitably losing the direct connection with the state's provision of these services to a protected class of people. Please heavily consider permanently carving out I/DD long term care services from KanCare. The repercussions will be devastating to the residents of Seward Co. living with developmental disabilities and I think they have had their lives compromised enough.

Thank you for hearing me today.

Social Services Budget
FEBRUARY 20, 2013

ATTACHMENT # 10