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626 Minnesota Ave. | Suite 200 | Kansas City, KS 66101

Good morning Mister Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Garrett Drake and I serve as the Chief Executive Officer for MidAmerica Alliance For Access in Kansas City, KS. It is my pleasure to be here today to give some brief remarks relative to the conversation and offer up a few thoughts as it relates to our perspective at MidAmerica Alliance For Access.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with us, we are a 27 year old nonprofit based out of Kansas City, who provides a variety of services both in Kansas as well as Missouri for individuals with disabilities. It is our mission to partner with both the state and our healthcare institutions to keep our consumers as independent as possible, all the while being the best possible stewards of the taxpayer's dollars as possible.

My entire life I have struggled with Muscular Dystrophy and had to fight for the right to an education, healthcare and to provide for my family. I believe the state of Kansas does many things right and we at MidAmerica Alliance For Access believe we have more to gain in the future than we have to lose.

Over the course of the last year, I have been very pleased with the work Secretary Keck and Commissioner Haehn in partnership with our organization and the entire network in Kansas who provide similar services. They have demonstrated their willingness to partner with our nonprofit network to provide the best possible services to Kansans all the while balancing the difficult work of being as fiscally responsible with tax dollars as possible. We have found the administration to be very open to honest dialogue about how to best serve people with the greatest needs, to keep them at home and independent rather than in an institution which would cost the taxpayers thousands of dollars more every month per Kansas resident we serve.

We are of the opinion that, while not perfect, KanCare provides a solid framework for our industry to improve the lives of disabled Kansans. I believe strongly the best course of action for everyone is to work within the system, work together, and improve the existing programs.



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We have seen on numerous occasions that when we sit across the table from members of the administration to discuss productive steps forward, we have only ever been able to move forward productively to the mutual benefit of all parties. The reality is that the State is tasked with an incredibly difficult responsibility to provide better service and to do it in a more fiscally prudent way than ever before. I am here to tell you this is definitely possible. We all stand to gain by a more streamlined, cohesive and efficient healthcare system than what we have to lose. This means we need to look at how to best improve the system the state has worked hard to create. KanCare can and needs to work. The solution to challenges with KanCare is working as team for the residents of Kansas in collaboration with the state.

Something you won't hear very often is the fact that KanCare is working for hundreds of our consumers with very little complaints. I know, because I manage those programs and see it firsthand every day. Unfortunately what we hear are only about problems; not the successes and that isn't fair to the taxpayer of this state, the consumers we provide services to, the nonprofits who administer these programs, and certainly not the administration and elected officials who have all worked so hard to improve the lives of Kansans.

We at MidAmerica Alliance For Access have saved the state hundreds of thousands of dollars under this system last year, and we are only one small provider. Our entire network has proven we could save millions of dollars a year if we work to improve the existing KanCare structure.

I am here to tell you that we can and should work together for the benefit of the taxpayer as well as those most vulnerable in our society that I have the privilege to represent and work for at MidAmerica Alliance For Access. Centers for Independent Living have a unique opportunity to continue expanding services on multiple fronts and from multiple departments all the while only ever saving more money for taxpayers if we all work together. There are more opportunities for the future and I am excited about the prospects.



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I want to thank the Administration as well as you hard working public servants who have chosen to serve Kansas and are committed to improving the lives of those who cannot do so by themselves. This is what makes us a civilized society and I'm proud of Kansas and this administration for doing something other than trying to continue in what was a broken system that wasted so much money. Keep up the good work – I look forward to working with you.

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