



Testimony – Federal and State Affairs Committee

March 14, 2018

Dan Goodman, Association Chair

Kansas Association of Area Agencies on Aging & Disabilities (k4ad)

Support position – HB 2754 – Guardianship Assistance Program

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2754 to implement a Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) in Kansas.

The 2010 Census Bureau confirm that 7-10% of children in America today are being raised by grandparents or other relatives, we believe this statistic would be a consistent finding in Kansas. Grandparents are taking on the responsibilities required to raise these children every day and 20% of the grandparents taking on these responsibilities fall below the poverty line.

DCF has shared that 75% of the 7,000 children in Kansas foster care are eligible for Title IV-E funding and the GAP Program. GAP makes sense because the cost of guardianship assistance is far less than the cost of foster care maintenance. The federal funding pays the lion's share of the cost, so for every dollar of State General fund the Federal government pays the State \$1 to \$3 dollars. GAP is also designed so that payment to the guardian cannot exceed the foster care payment amount so, there is no up-charge to the State for participating in GAP.

A Kansas GAP program would complement the existing foster care system. Family members seeking to become guardians under this program must also become a licensed foster parent. The GAP program simply offers another option for families when foster care is not the best solution.

So, why not utilize the funding to assist these Kansans?

There are Thirty-three states that have implemented a GAP program, including all states surrounding Kansas. These states with have shown cost savings by reducing foster care expenses through the support of GAP programs. States are finding that the cost of providing GAP programs is less than the state's cost of foster care maintenance programs.

By bringing the GAP program to our State, Kansas will be supporting the well-being of two populations, the senior grandparents and the grandchildren in need. The bonus, is that this program as experienced in other States could provide our State with an overall cost savings. Sounds like a win-win solution to us.

We appreciate your support of HB 2754 to implement a Guardianship Assistance Program in Kansas, and we would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Kansas Association of
Area Agencies on
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