



## *Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities*

SAM BROWNBACK, Governor  
DAWN R. WILSON, Chairperson  
STEVE GIEBER Executive Director  
[sgieber@kcdd.org](mailto:sgieber@kcdd.org)

Docking State Office Bldg., Rm 141,  
915 SW Harrison Topeka, KS 66612  
785/296-2609 1-877-431-4604(toll free)  
[www.kcdd.org](http://www.kcdd.org)

*"To ensure the opportunity to make choices regarding participation in society  
and quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities"*

Feb. 14, 2017

Re: Testimony in support of SB 160

Chair Senator Vicki Schmidt, and members of the Committee on Public Health and Welfare.

I am Steve Gieber, the Executive Director of the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities (KCDD). The Council is made up of self-advocates, family members, state agencies, and our partners identified in the Federal Developmental Disabilities Act.

Federal and state laws created the Council to advise policymakers on issues that impact people with disabilities and their families as well as carryout activities that increase self-advocacy, systems change, and capacity building.

The Council is providing testimony in support of SB 160. We have two points we want to make.

The Council is directed by Federal Law to advocate and inform Legislatures about issues that affect people with Disabilities. We are protected from State interference with our advocacy work by Federal Law.

Yet the Staff of the Council are state employees. We get support from the Department for Children and Families. Because we are still part of the state we still consider how our testimony will be perceived by the State Agencies.

The Ombudsman Office under KDADS is in the same situation. Even if they do the best they can they still have a structural barrier to true advocacy.

There is a significant imbalance in power between the State Agencies, MCO's and the beneficiaries of the services and supports. This un-level playing field can be leveled by a robust Ombudsman Office that is properly funded. The current funding is totally inadequate for them to do the job that is needed.

In the book, "Reframing Organizations", authors, Bowman and Deal, made the point that every organization is, "perfectly designed to get the results it is getting." If you want a different result you must change the organization structure.

SB 160 will benefit people with disabilities and address the funding and underlying structural issues.