

March 13, 2019

RE: HB 2034 – The Supported Decision-Making  
Agreements Act

Senate Judiciary Committee

Testimony in support of HB 2034

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the committee today. My name is Brad Linnenkamp and I work for the Self-Advocate Coalition of Kansas. I, literally, would not be sitting here with you today if it weren't for supported decision making. I was raised to be an independent productive citizen by parents who taught me the value of standing up for myself. They also supported me in decisions that didn't quite work out the way it was planned. The important fact is that it was MY decision.

Years ago I would take someone with me when I went to the doctor's office for appointments. Far too often the medical staff only talked to my staff and not me. I don't take anyone with me anymore and people are forced to address me as the competent individual I am. I have been employed at my position at SACK for twenty years. I own my own home and accessible van. And none of that would have been possible without supported decision making.

Many of my peers do not have this opportunity...because schools seldom see anything beyond guardianship and guardianship seems like the right path to many parents. As someone who has been there, other pathways to adulthood and independence should be examined. It's time we made supported decision making an option for all individuals.