

Testimony in support of HB 2122

House Judiciary Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the committee today. My name is Brad Linnenkamp and I have been employed for over twenty years as a disability rights advocate. 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.

An example is that 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 the person that came to support me. I don't take anyone with me anymore and people are forced to address me as the competent individual I am. I own my own home and accessible van. And none of that would have been possible without supported decision making. It's time we made supported decision making an option for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities instead of having people think that guardianship is the only alternative.