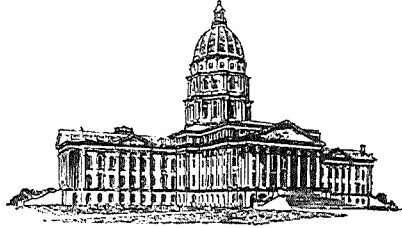


STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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HENRY HELGERSON
83RD DISTRICT

February 1, 2022

Sen. Carolyn McGinn

Chair, Senate Local Government

Re: SB316

In the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's the federal government and many state governments, had a policy of de-institutionalization...moving disabled individuals to a less restrictive, community setting. These group homes began to encounter local ordinances established to restrict or ban their existence in residential settings. As a result, state and federal laws were enacted to protect the group homes right to locate in a single family, residential neighborhood. If you look back in Kansas, you will find my name on committee reports and legislation advocating these positions.

However, moving ahead 30 years, we find there is a need to modify the law. This proposed legislation only restricts group homes from being 1320 feet from other group homes, thereby reducing the concentration of group homes in a neighborhood. It also grandfathers existing group homes from these changes. In some areas of Wichita, you may find four, five, or six converted group homes on the same block.

There are three problems with the high concentration of group homes:

1. A decrease in property values
2. The loss of a "neighborhood feeling"
3. A self-fulfilling prophecy of attracting more group homes to the neighborhood

The law in the 1990's was the right thing to do. But conditions change and we must protect the integrity of the neighborhoods while preserving the rights of the disabled.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Henry Helgerson', written over a printed name.

Rep. Henry Helgerson