



INDEPENDENCE  
INCLUSION  
INNOVATION

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TO: Representative Brenda Landwehr and  
Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee

FR: Matt Fletcher, Executive Director, InterHab

RE: HB 2777

Chair Landwehr and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to share our support for House Bill 2777, a bill which seeks to restrict usage of body cameras during fire marshal inspections of patient care facilities.

While InterHab's membership does not include operators of patient care facilities, our members do believe strongly in protecting individual rights such as the consent, dignity and privacy of persons who reside in such facilities (many of whom are also persons with disabilities).

Our members go to great lengths to assist persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in creating homes for themselves in the community. As such, we adhere to a philosophy which respects that we are in someone's home whenever we are providing service to the individual. We know that the professionals who operate patient care facilities also share that philosophy. Bringing body cameras into such settings fails to respect the autonomy of Kansans within their own home.

Further, the practice of body camera usage does not align with the direction Kansas is headed in complying with the federal HCBS Medicaid Settings Final Rule. The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has repeatedly stressed the need to create greater levels of choice and autonomy for persons within Medicaid-funded programs as requirements of the Final Rule. Continued use of body cameras during inspections will most likely place the state in the crosshairs of federal scrutiny during a critical period of required compliance with the Final Rule.

We believe newly appointed State Fire Marshal Engholm to be highly skilled and a good match for his position. Moreover, we believe he will bring a reasonable and pragmatic approach to the role. We look forward to collaborating with him, and with community stakeholders, in finding balance between the needs of the Office of State Fire Marshal and the rights of persons served via Medicaid-funded programs. HB 2777 provides helpful legislative direction in establishing such balance.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide supportive testimony of HB 2777. If you require any further information regarding this testimony, please do not hesitate to contact me.