



Martha Gabehart, Executive Director

Jeff Colyer, M.D., Governor

Testimony in Support of HB 2663 Enacting the KanCare/Medicaid Ombudsman Act
By Martha K. Gabehart, Executive Director
Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns (KCDC)
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2663 which creates the KanCare/Medicaid Ombudsman Act. I am Martha Gabehart, Executive Director of the Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns (KCDC). KCDC is a catalyst for change in government for people with disabilities. We work with the governor, legislature and state agencies on issues that adversely affect Kansans with disabilities.

I was loaned to the KanCare Ombudsman's office two years ago for three half-days a week to help answer calls and emails from KanCare members, applicants, providers and others about issues with KanCare. I have experienced the increase in contacts and requests for assistance with filing for state fair hearings and communicating with the KanCare Clearinghouse. There is no service that is helping everyone who wants to file for a state fair hearing. The KanCare Ombudsman staff is not able to respond to requests for one-on-one help filing for and/or preparing for these hearings. Information is supplied on how to file for a state fair hearing and how to contact the Office of Administrative Hearings.

The Ombudsman's office needs more staff to keep up with this growing demand for assistance and the growing need for assistance with state fair hearings. KCDC supports HB 2663 and the efforts to help Medicaid recipients and applicants receive and maintain those services.

Thank you again for this opportunity. If there are questions, please feel free to contact me.