

Written testimony only

March 13, 2022

I am a proponent of Senate Bill 276.

Chair Concannon and Committee Members:

I had never met a blind person until a wonderful, energetic blind lady began attending Alzheimer's support group meetings at the Alzheimer's Association office in Prairie Village. She was the caregiver for her mother who had Alzheimer's disease, and I was the caregiver for my wife who suffered from a different type of dementia. I was impressed that a blind person could do many things that a sighted person could do. She certainly did not let blindness hold her back!

Over a period of a few years, her mother passed away and so did my wife. Eventually, we started dating and we got married. She and other blind people I have since met continue to impress me with what they are capable of doing. Although she is not a blind parent, she and I both know blind people that can benefit from the passage of SB 276. This important proposed legislation addresses a long-standing problem with blind parents losing the opportunity to raise their children in peace only because of their blindness. Without this package of guaranteed legal rights, blind parents will continue to face unwarranted obstacles and will continue to be denied the opportunity to raise and care for children in various situations such as adoptions, foster care placement, guardianship, and court cases involving child custody and visitation.

Sincerely,

Donald Mulik

4512 W. 76th Street

Prairie Village, Johnson County, KS 66208

House district 21