

September 6, 2023

The Honorable Stephanie A. Young, Chair
House Families, Children and Seniors Committee
Michigan House of Representatives

Re: HB 4841

Dear Representative Young,

The Arc Michigan represents people with developmental disabilities and their families and has 29 local chapters throughout Michigan. We work to ensure people with disabilities are included in our communities.

We are thankful that you are interested in improving the adult foster care system. There is much that needs attention. While we can appreciate your efforts, we feel this current approach is not beneficial to those living in group settings, as it moves the system backward toward more of a medical model.

The Arc Michigan, as an advocacy organization, has been working to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities for over 70 years. Over the last few decades, we have particularly tried to move services away from a medical model to one that values all people and their contributions. A medical model seeks to fix or cure people. We believe individuals are fine as they are, and the issue is providing the support needed so people living in these settings can continue to contribute to their communities and live valued lives. That in no way negates the need for medical care or safety provisions! It just means that daily lives do not need medical supervision. What's needed is an adequate number of trained staff, good person-centered planning and access to individualized services and supports.

Additional concerns include:



- A requirement for a completely new set of trainings mostly centered on aging;
- A restriction of medication administration to only the LPN or a CAN; on site services of LPN 24 hours/5 days per week;
- A licensed social worker on staff providing a minimum of one hour per week per resident; and
- Prohibitive costs

The most serious issue facing people with disabilities, whether they live in group settings or not, is the lack of trained direct care workers. Until the issues of compensation, including benefits, are resolved there will continue to be a crisis in services for people with disabilities and those who are aging.

We do support looking at the current licensing process and consider stronger measures that increase accountability and transparency within the system.

Should you desire any additional information, please feel free to contact me. The Arc Michigan would be happy to assist in improving HB 4841.

Sincerely,



Sherri Boyd

