

Senator Lee and Members of Senate Human Services,

My name is Sargianna Wutzke, and I am the Lead Operations Officer of Community Options, a statewide agency that provides services to individuals with developmental disabilities. I am here in support of SB 2192. I have worked for community provider organizations for over 20 years and have been a part of half a dozen accreditations in two different provider organizations. Currently, provider organizations are accredited by the Council on Quality Leadership and the accreditation lasts up to four years. Last session, the department did not put accreditation of provider organizations in their budget despite doing that previously. We had our accreditation in 2024 and had to pay approximately \$25,000 for our accreditation.

This session NDACP is going to ask for accreditation to be voluntary as organizations feel that the state does a very thorough job with their oversight of provider agencies which is far greater than the accreditation that takes place by an outside organization. The state ensures quality assurance of each agency by monitoring all general event reports (incident reports) of each agency as well as doing training and monitoring with each agency every three years where they go over those incident reports with administration as well as the DD Program Administrator. Every three years, the State Home and Community Based Surveyor comes and does a survey of each agency. Agencies that provide ICF level of care have surveys by Title 19 yearly. On top of these, any agency that is representative payee for an individual is subject to extremely thorough financial audits by Protection and Advocacy.

If it is decided that community providers have to continue to get accredited by an outside organization, agencies would like the state to support with payment of the accreditation. An accreditation is expensive for an organization especially those that are just starting as a provider. Again, I encourage a Due Pass on SB 2192. I am happy to answer any questions.

Sargianna Wutzke

Lead Operations Officer-Community Options Inc.