

***Please Support***

**H.B. 1542 Representative Bob Ramsey**

**S.B. 1494 Senator Ferrell Haile**

Relative to the Division of TennCare– requires TennCare to enroll all eligible people on the referral list with custodial parents or caregivers 75 and over into the Employment and Community First (ECF) CHOICES program or similarly capped program for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

**Rationale:**

* In 2016, the “aging caregiver” bill passed by the General Assembly required DIDD to enroll all eligible people on the waiting list with custodial parents or caregivers 75 and over into the Self-Determination Waiver or similarly capped waiver. People with developmental disabilities OTHER THAN intellectual disability were not eligible for services when this law was passed.
* **On July 1, 2016, the Employment and Community First (ECF) CHOICES program opened for enrollment. It expanded eligibility to include people with developmental disabilities OTHER THAN intellectual disability**
* Though now eligible for services, people with developmental disabilities OTHER THAN intellectual disability are not covered under the current “aging caregiver” statute
* **This legislation will “level the playing field” to enable all individuals eligible for the ECF CHOICES program with custodial parents or caregivers 75 and older to enroll into Group 5 or a similarly capped program**
* Having an intellectual or developmental disability (I/DD) can significantly impact a person’s capacity to perform day-to-day activities such as eating, dressing, grooming, using the bathroom, finding and maintaining employment, and many other activities most Tennesseans take for granted
* **The stress on families caring for a loved one with I/DD is extreme, especially when caregivers are aging parents. Aging parents often have their own healthcare needs that compromise their ability provide adequate support – putting the person’s health and safety at risk**
* After a lifetime of providing continuous support at no cost to the state, these elderly custodial parents and/or custodial caregivers will benefit from the peace of mind that comes from knowing their family member will have needed services
* **Proactive services save the Tennessee money over the long term. The average cost plan of a person enrolled into services prior to a “crisis” is significantly less than persons enrolling in services during a “crisis” situation.**

**Contact: Carrie Hobbs Guiden, Executive Director, The Arc TN** [**cguiden@thearctn.org**](mailto:cguiden@thearctn.org)**, 480-236-9722 or Carol Westlake, Executive Director, Tennessee Disability Coalition** [**ddh@tndisability.org**](mailto:carol_w@tndisability.org,) **(615) 383-9442**