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April 29, 2019

GOVERNOR HOLCOMB SIGNS LANDMARK LEGISLATION SUPPORTING THE INDEPENDENCE OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

INDIANAPOLIS – On Wednesday, April 24, Governor Eric Holcomb signed legislation recognizing Supported Decision-Making Agreements as a valid way for someone to demonstrate decision-making capacity in Indiana and requires Less Restrictive Alternatives (LRAs), including Supported Decision-Making to be considered before a court will appoint a guardian.

“I was pleased to author Senate Bill 380, which puts Indiana at the forefront of state policy that supports the independence of those with disabilities,” said Senator Eric Koch (R- Bedford), author of the legislation. “No longer will guardianships be the only alternative. Our courts will now have more options to ensure that only the least restrictive option is used in situations where our fellow Hoosiers need some extra help. Thank you to Indiana Disability Rights, The Arc of Indiana, and Self-Advocates of Indiana for your help in passing this legislation.”

“We were happy to represent Jamie Beck in becoming the first person in Indiana to have her guardianship terminated in favor of a supported decision-making agreement; and we are ecstatic that because of her paving the way for this law, others will have the same ability to preserve their independence, their dignity, and their civil rights,” stated Melissa Keyes, Legal Director for Indiana Disability Rights and Jamie’s attorney.

“The Arc of Indiana is thrilled to see SEA 380 signed into law,” said Kim Dodson, Executive Director of The Arc of Indiana. “It is always our goal to make sure that people with disabilities have as much independence as possible for as long as possible in their lives. Supported Decision-Making will allow that to happen and be an important option for people with disabilities to remain in control of decisions affecting their lives. We were happy to work with Indiana Disability Rights and Self Advocates of Indiana to get this legislation passed.”

SB 380 was authored by Senators Eric Koch (R-Bedford) and Randall Head (R-Logansport), co-authored by Senators Timothy Lanane (D-Anderson), Greg Taylor (D-Indianapolis), Mike Bohacek (R-Michana Shores), and Linda Rogers (R-Granger). House sponsors were

Equality Through Advocacy

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Representatives Wendy McNamara (R-Evansville), Jerry Torr (R-Carmel), Edward DeLaney (D-Indianapolis), and Anthony Cook (R-Cicero).

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The mission of Indiana Disability Rights is to protect and promote the rights of individuals with disabilities through empowerment and advocacy. For more information, visit www.IndianaDisabilityRights.org.