



NEWS

From the Illinois Senate

State Senator Dave Koehler

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Further information:

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KOEHLER FIGHTS AGAINST UNNECESSARY INSTITUTIONALIZATION

SPRINGFIELD—State Senator David Koehler (D-Peoria) is sponsoring legislation that will help physically and mentally disabled individuals return to their previous living situations without spending unnecessary time in nursing homes or other facilities.

House Bill 746, as amended, authorizes the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) to create a pilot program focused on rapidly reintegrating disabled individuals after brief hospital or nursing home stays. The program will focus on people who spend less than six months at a hospital or nursing home.

“I think unnecessary institutionalization is a problem for everyone involved,” said Koehler. “It makes the lives of the disabled individuals even more difficult, keeps these people apart from their families and friends, and costs more money. I believe that if people can live in their own homes, they should.”

Senator Koehler’s legislation sets out careful guidelines for selecting participants in the program. It also initially limits the scope of the program to facilities already maintained by IDHS. The program can be expanded if more funding becomes available and the department thinks it appropriate.

“I have high hopes for this pilot program,” asserted Koehler. “If it is successful, we will take an important step forward for patients’ rights and improving our health care system.”

Koehler is committed to health care reform and wants to see all Illinois citizens get the medical attention they need. He is also sponsoring legislation supporting home health care for victims of serious illnesses and helping patients on life support pay for their heat and hot water.

House Bill 746 now awaits the consideration of the full Senate.

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