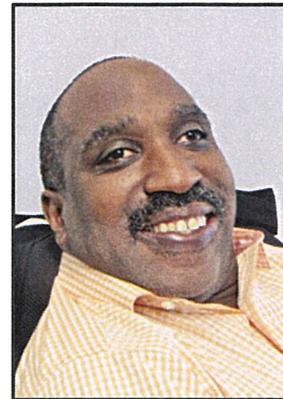




Ricky Broussard

Achieve with us.

**Sunset Advisory Commission
Testimony Ricky Broussard
The Arc of Texas
Governmental Affairs Committee Volunteer
November 13, 2014**



I want to thank you all for having me testify today. My name is Ricky Broussard and I am a self-advocate who lives in Texas City, Texas. I am representing myself and The Arc of Texas. I am in the Home and Community Based Services (HCS) waiver program and I live in my own apartment and have support staff that help me in the morning and in the evening. I was on the HCS waiting list for nearly 13 years.

I work as a trainer for Project SPEAK and am a long standing member of The Governmental Affairs Committee for The Arc of Texas.

I serve on the Consumer Directed Services Workgroup and the IDD System Redesign Advisory Committee. I am here to ask that you keep advisory committees because they are an important way for the state to know what people need and how to make things better for people who receive services.

It took a long time for people like me to be included on committees and in the policy process. Before, only professionals were able to give input. People with disabilities are the most affected by changes in services, so they need to be included in making decisions about their lives.

All people have different experiences with receiving services and different needs, so it is important for people to be able to share what works and what doesn't work for them. Advisory committees give people an opportunity to learn about other people's perspectives. Advisory committees allow professionals and self-advocates to work together on improving services and supports for Texans with disabilities.

In addition to having my voice heard, being involved in the advisory committees, has taught me more about how service systems work and let me know what changes are going to happen. Then, I can share the information with other people and help them get the services that they need.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input today.

Ricky Broussard

For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

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