



KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES  
TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
ON HB 2319

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 2319, which would expand Medicaid (i.e., Kancare) in the state of Kansas.

The Kansas Association of Counties considered this issue last fall as it created its Legislative Policy Statement for the 2015 legislative session. The issue was added to our policy statement after consideration by our Legislative Policy Committee, which includes seven county commissioners from across the state and three additional county officials. Our full membership of 104 counties voted to approve this policy position at our annual conference held in November, 2014.

County commissioners serve as the public board of health in Kansas counties, and 100 local health departments serve all 105 counties. As such, we play an integral role in the health of Kansas citizens.

We support HB 2319 because expanding Medicaid adds coverage for approximately 182,000 Kansans, which helps ensure that this segment of the population will get the preventative care and medical care that they need. Those who fall in this gap generally have incomes that are too high for Medicaid eligibility and incomes that are too low for premium tax credits in the health insurance marketplace.

Aside from the individual benefit to those in the eligibility gap, expanding Medicaid also benefits our hospitals. Due to reduced Medicaid reimbursements, our hospitals are losing revenues under the current Medicaid program without the expansion component. Many of our counties are concerned about losing their community hospital.

We understand that opponents of Medicaid expansion are concerned about the costs to our state. Under HB 2319, however, the Kansas expansion bill is "budget-neutral" and therefore the State of Kansas will not encounter these amounts.

I appreciate the opportunity to support HB 2319 and we ask for your support of the bill.

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