



“Unity Is Strength”

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To: House Committee on Health & Human Services

Reg: Support for HB 2319

From: Kansas Emergency Medical Services Association, Jason White

Date: March 12, 2015

The Kansas Emergency Medical Services Association (KEMSA) is the professional association representing the paramedics, EMT's and ambulance service's serving the citizens of Kansas. KEMSA works on various regulatory and legislative matters as well as conferences and educational programs.

The KEMSA Board of Directors has voted unanimously to endorse the expansion of KanCare.

There are two areas of direct impact regarding the emergency medical services community.

We are concerned about the impact on our rural hospitals. Already rural hospitals have cut back, had lay-offs and in other states closed. 20/22 of the hospital closures in the US in the last few years were in states which have not accepted Medicaid Expansion. Rural hospital closures will have a serious impact on the local ambulance services, dramatically increasing costs and impacting patient outcome.

Presently ambulance services provide treatment and transportation services to a large number of patients who cannot pay for the service. Many of these individuals would be covered by an expanded KanCare program. While the current payments made from the KanCare program for ambulance services are very low, they are better than no payment.

The already low Medicaid payment rates (well below the KDHE goal for these payments, well below the comparable levels with the federal Medicare program and far below the actual cost of the services provided) combined with the failure to accept offered federal funds to expand Medicaid means that local governments will be impacted by ever increasing levels of subsidization of ambulance services.