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Partners in America's Poverty Fighting Network

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Gary Brunk, Executive Director
Kansas Association of Community Action Programs (KACAP)
Testimony for House Health and Human Services Committee on House Bill 2319

Chairman Hawkins and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the Committee and to voice support for House Bill 2319.

KACAP is the membership association for Community Action Agencies in Kansas that are working to create economic opportunity in their communities. In order to create economic opportunity, Community Action Agencies work to better focus available local, state, private and federal resources to assist low-income individuals and families to acquire useful skills and knowledge, gain access to new opportunities and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

There are a many circumstances that result in people in Kansas being without insurance coverage. If someone gets laid off, works for a small business, or can only find a part-time job, they are very likely to end up in situations where health care is unavailable or unaffordable.

We need solutions that get everyone to participate in the health insurance system, which will make health care more efficient and affordable for all of us. Too many persons in Kansas remain uninsured, but instead of letting this crisis overwhelm us, we should get it under control by devising a plan and setting priorities. Dealing with this challenge now, rather than letting it continue, is the responsible thing to do.

We can solve this problem - one manageable step at a time. One such step would be the expansion of Medicaid. KACAP understands that before implementing a plan to expand access to Medicaid there are many details that would need to be worked out. We also believe that the benefits of making health insurance available to more Kansans – including not only better health but also higher earnings and more financial security – are powerful incentives to developing a plan that reflects the needs and values of our state.

KACAP supports House Bill 2319 because it will make development of such a plan possible.

KACAP Member Agencies and Board of Directors

Community Action, Inc.
East Central Kansas Economic Opportunity Corporation
Economic Opportunity Foundation
Harvest America Corporation

Mid-Kansas Community Action Program
Northeast Kansas Community Action Program
Southeast Kansas Community Action Program
Wichita Sedgwick County Community Action Partnership