



Kansas Association of Counties
Testimony to Senate Public Health and Welfare on SB 123
February 11, 2015

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Kansas Association of Counties stands in opposition to SB 123. We support the Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas' position that the statute governing mental illness prescriptions should *not* be repealed.

Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) coordinate the delivery of publicly-funded, community-based behavioral health services. CMHCs are required to provide services to all patients that visit them, regardless of their ability to pay, making them the safety net for Kansans with mental health needs. The State and counties financially support CMHCs, and it is in the best interest of Kansas citizens that this partnership continue with adequate funding for the important services provided by CMHCs.

Like the Association of CMHCs, we too are concerned about any attempts to repeal the current exemption on mental health medications from prior authorization and preferred drug lists. Kansas statutory law exempts mental health prescription drugs from a Medicaid preferred formulary and prior authorization. Specifically, the statute refers to "Medications including atypical anti-psychotic medications, conventional anti-psychotic medications and other medications used for the treatment of severe mental illness." We agree with the Association of CMHCs that the current statutory provision on medication is the best policy for the state and its citizens. We ask that the Committee preserve the current statutory exemption.

The state prisons and county jails are seeing more and more mentally ill inmates. We appear to have two alternatives: appropriate monies to CMHCs, other mental health providers and programs and take steps to ensure that these programs can be successful. Otherwise, we incur costs for mental illness in the more expensive venue, incarceration.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit written testimony.

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