

Approved 3-28-89
Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE

The meeting was called to order by SENATOR ROY M. EHRLICH at
Chairperson

10:00 a.m./~~pm~~ on March 22, 1989 in room 526-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present:

Emalene Correll, Legislative Research
Bill Wolff, Legislative Research
Norman Furse, Revisors Office
Clarene Wilms, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Winston Barton, Secretary, Social Rehabilitation Services
Mary Ann Gabel, Executive Director, Board of Behavioral Sciences
Ann Weick, Dean of Social Welfare, Kansas University
Carl Myers, President, Kansas Chapter of N.A.S.W.
Kathryn Spragens, Director, Social Work, K U Medical Center
Jacque E. Gibbons, Director, Social Work Program, Kansas State University
Written Testimony, HB-2049 Royal R. Kimmel, City Administrator, Sabetha,
Kansas.

Winston Barton, Secretary, SRS, appeared before the committee in support of HB-2434 stating that there has been some confusion as to where SRS stood concerning licensure of social workers and he wanted it known that he firmly believed and wanted every worker involved in social work for SRS to be licensed. He stated there have been some problems in hiring social workers in the state of Kansas and part of the problem is the mechanism they must go through to get someone licensed. SRS has asked for an amendment that would require completion of the investigation, in 10 days time, of the school of social work and references for someone meeting basic requirements. Given the limited staff of the Behavioral Sciences Board it would be difficult to meet these requirements. It presently takes 1 to 3 months until queries are returned and until that time a temporary license cannot be issued. In contrast, if applicants have a degree transcript and references, SRS will verify qualifications by phone and put the applicant to work in 2 or 3 days. A one to two month waiting period results in people going elsewhere to get a job. Vacancies take 2 to 3 months to fill and KanWork was delayed in implementation because they could not find enough licensed social workers in Kansas. Mr. Barton said that if the committee cannot pass out a bill that gives the state an opportunity to license on a temporary basis he would probably ask the committee to seriously consider exempting SRS from licensure. Secretary Barton told the committee they must leave the segment of the bill in which a person with a degree from an accredited college might be issued a temporary license. He referred to the fact that Oklahoma did not have licensure for social workers that worked for the state since it was felt that if you worked for the state supervision of those persons was built in.

Mary Ann Gabel, Executive Director, Board of Behavioral Sciences explained to the committee that the amendments made by the House Committee as a Whole were offered in a less extensive form during hearings in the House Public Health and Welfare hearings and were rejected. Ms. Gabel stated that as lack of staff would make more timely processing of applications difficult. Ms. Gable took the committee through the various problems in the bill as shown in Attachment 1. She also voiced concerns about the lack of direct supervision by a licensed social worker for persons working on a temporary license or permit.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE,

room 526-S Statehouse, at 10:00 a.m./~~p.m.~~ on March 22, 1989

Ann Weick, Dean School of Social Welfare, KU, told the committee she opposed HB-2434 in its present form which included the amendments made by the House Committee as a Whole. The present form of the bill make it possible for any person awarded a degree in social work to be eligible for a temporary license and circumvents meeting all the requirements while continuing to maintain a temporary license for an indefinite period. (Attachment 2)

Carl S. Myers, President, Kansas Chapter of NASW told the committee that his organization is opposed to HB-2434 in its present form. The original intent of the bill was to allow a qualified applicant to obtain a temporary license prior to taking the required written examination, and therefore be available for immediate employment as a professional social worker. Current language would eliminate any review of educational standards and eliminate any criteria for a "social work degree." Mr. Myers stated that there were an estimated 200 candidates for graduation this spring in eleven approved social work programs in Kansas. (Attachment 3)

Kathryn W. Spragens, Director, Department of Social Services, University of Kansas Medical Center, told the committee she supported HB-2434 but had concerns over the House floor amendments. Ms. Spragen stated that in her opinion the need for more professional social workers should not be accomplished by legislative mandate. As originally proposed the bill would allow temporary licensure for otherwise qualified social workers who wish to move to the state of Kansas. Ms. Spragens stated concern over the elimination of "direct" supervision since social workers work with some of the most difficult problems people face. (Attachment 4)

Jacque E. Gibbons, KSU, Kansas Council of Social Work Education, told the committee that the amendment, lines 206 to 235 having to do with temporary permission to practice social work elicited concern as it appears to address a problem different than the one originally addressed. Mr. Gibbons urged adoption of HB-2343 as originally written and suggested further examination of the need for more significant changes before changing social work licensing statutes. (Attachment 5)

Written testimony concerning HB-2049 by Royal R. Kimmel, City Administrator, Sabetha, Kansas, was presented to committee members. Mr. Kimmel stated that due to size, Sabetha combines jobs for the most effective utilization of tax dollars and a full time dispatcher for emergency services is not feasible. It was further stated that given the fiscal restraints of small local governments HB-2343 would have the effect of providing a poor quality of response to emergencies. (Attachment 6)

The meeting adjourned at 10:58 a.m. and will convene on Thursday, March 23 at 10:00 a.m. in room 526-S.

SENATE
PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE March 22, 1989

(PLEASE PRINT)
NAME AND ADDRESS

ORGANIZATION

(PLEASE PRINT) NAME AND ADDRESS	ORGANIZATION
ALYN O. LOCKNER TOPEKA	S.R.S.
MaryAnn Gabel "	BSRB
Rita Non "	Aly Gen.
Jacque E. Gibbons	KSU/ KCSWE
Kathryn W. Spriggs	KUMC
Gigi Felix	Kansas NASW
Carl Myers	President KS chapter NASW
William Stevenson	NASW
Imogene Langdon	Washburn - SW student
KATH R LANDIS	CHRISTIAN SCIENCE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION FOR KANSAS
Anne Smith	Heim + Ebert
Joe Myers	S.R.S.
LAUREN HARRON	S.R.S.
Doreen Anderson	SRS
Billie Orr	SLC
Gph Peter	Res Assoc Prof Psychology

JOHN PREBLE, B.S., *Chairperson*
MARY ANN GABEL, B.B.A., *Executive Director*



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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE

H.B. 2434

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 1989

SENATOR EHRLICH, VICE-CHAIRPERSON LANGWORTHY AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

I am Mary Ann Gabel, Executive Director of the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board, appearing before you on behalf of the board and in support of H.B. 2434 as amended by the House Public Health and Welfare Committee. The board is opposed to the amendments on the bill that were made on the floor of the House by Rep. Jack Shriver and passed by the House Committee of the Whole as indicated in lines 102-103, 114, 125-126, 221-225, 232-235, 239-241, and 264.

This legislation was introduced at the board's request with its intent to accomplish the following: eliminate the residency requirement for professional counselor registration and social work licensure; authorize the board to expand the issuance of temporary licenses to social work applicants; authorize the board to charge a fee for temporary permits; provide immunity for persons who in good faith file complaints against licensed or registered persons; and revoke two psychology statutes, form of petitions and service of petition, which are now governed by the Kansas Administrative Procedures Act.

- 1) Residency requirements. The current law requires a registered professional counselor applicant or a licensed social worker applicant to be a legal resident of Kansas or be employed or providing services in Kansas. Legal counsel believes this requirement can be challenged as being unconstitutional.

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Attachment 1

2) Temporary Permits and Fees. SRS has expressed to the board the problems it has been experiencing in recruiting licensed social workers to fill vacant positions and has requested assistance from the board. The board believes the proposed amendments in the original bill may provide some assistance to SRS. The original amendment to K.S.A. 1988 Supp. 75-5354 (h) will enable a greater number of social work applicants to obtain a temporary license. This provision, however, will increase the board staff's work load and will be an added administrative expense. The board believes this expense should be borne by the direct recipients of this service and is reflected by the addition of a fee for temporary licenses in lines 262-264.

3) Immunity Statute. Recently, the board has had several instances in which patients have declined or indicated their hesitancy to file a complaint against a licensed or registered person for fear of retaliation. These persons are concerned that the licensee/registrant will sue the complaining patient for libel or slander.

Common law provides a qualified immunity for persons filing complaints with a regulatory agency. (There is no immunity if a person knowingly and willfully files a false complaint.)

The Board of Healing Arts and Board of Nursing have statutes codifying the common-law immunity. The board and legal counsel believe it to be in the best interests of the consumer of mental health services to have this provision codified in the board's statutes.

4) Revocation of Psychology Statutes - Form of Petitions and Service of Petition. K.S.A. 1988 Supp. 74-5329 - Form of petitions; and K.S.A. 1988 Supp. 74-5331 - Service of petition are statutes which should be repealed as each concerns the form of petition and service of petition in actions against the licenses of psychologists. Both these areas are now governed by the Kansas Administrative Procedures Act (KAPA).

Having provided the background information and rationale for the board's request for introduction of the bill, I now wish to address the amendments made by the House Committee of the Whole.

1) Amendments in lines 102-103, 114, and 125-126 now require the board to issue a license to persons who have a temporary license.

- 2) Amendments in lines 221-225 establish the possibility of two sets of educational standards - one standard for persons who have not been issued a temporary license and another (possibly lower) standard for persons who have been issued a temporary license. The amendment requires the board to issue a temporary license to persons who have (been) awarded a degree in social work. You will note that the requirement that the applicant shall have met all qualifications for licensure under provisions of this act have been stricken. Therefore, there is no provision for the applicant to have graduated from "an accredited college or university, including completion of a social work program recognized and approved by the board, pursuant to rules and regulations adopted by the board." There is no provision that the applicant even have a minimum of a baccalaureate degree.
- 3) Amendments in line 221 require the board to issue the temporary license, as opposed to issue upon the certification of the executive director. Since the board meets only every 8-10 weeks, this amendment appears to inhibit the timely process of issuing temporary licenses, which serves to defeat part of the original intent.
- 4) Amendments in lines 232-233 permit persons who have been issued the temporary license to be issued more than one temporary license irregardless of whether the applicant fails the examination or fails to be seated for the examination. Therefore, it appears an applicant could reapply after each examination and continue to practice without ever passing the examination and without ever being issued a license.
- 5) Amendments in lines 239-241 require the board to give written notice of its denial within 10 days after the decision of the board. Given limited staff and the increased work responsibilities, this requirement could work a hardship on the board staff.
- 6) Amendments in line 234 eliminate the requirement that persons with temporary licenses work only under the "direct" supervision of a licensed social worker.
- 7) Amendments in line 264 reduce the maximum fee for temporary license from \$50 to \$25.

The board's general concern, in addition to the specific concerns expressed, is that this legislation neither represents the original intent of the board nor the intent of the House Public Health and Welfare Committee. The amendments passed by the House Committee of the Whole go beyond those which were requested by SRS during public hearings before the House Public Health and Welfare Committee, which were reviewed and rejected by the committee.

If the committee is to pass this legislation, the board respectfully requests that the amendments made by the House Committee of the Whole be eliminated as it was never the board's intent to lower educational licensure standards. It is, of course, for the legislature to ultimately decide the minimum level of care to be provided to the citizens of Kansas; however, during a period when the legislature is reviewing malpractice litigation and associated costs, it seems a direct contradiction to even consider lowering licensure standards.

The board members and I are distressed with the misinformation that is apparently being circulated by uninformed persons regarding the board's social work licensure policies and procedures. We welcome any direct inquiry regarding a specific application or the board in general.

Thank you for providing me an opportunity to appear before you today. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Testimony Related to House Bill 2434:

Presented to Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

March 22, 1989

Ann Weick, Dean, School of Social Welfare
University of Kansas

I wish to oppose H.B. 2434 in its present form and urge you to recommend its passage as amended and passed by the House Public Health and Welfare Committee. The amendments made on the floor of the House alter the original intent of the bill and will, if left untouched, create consequences that work directly against its intent. As dean of a school which offers the only masters degree program in social work in the state and one of its largest undergraduate social work programs, I am concerned about the effects of the bill as it was passed by the full House.

H.B. 2434 was developed to serve as one small solution to a much larger problem. The Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services has had difficulty filling positions with licensed social workers. As one response, H.B. 2434 was introduced to amend existing statutes so that applicants otherwise fully eligible to be licensed could be granted a temporary license pending their completion of the exam. Because of the timing of the exam, some social work graduates must wait a month or two between graduation and the June exam time. As passed by the House Committee, H.B. 2434 would allow them to be employed in the state of Kansas as a social worker until they passed the next-scheduled licensing exam.

It should be noted that many students avoid this delay by taking the February or April exam, prior to graduation. Successful completion of the exam, combined with completion of degree and fulfillment of other requirements, make them fully eligible as licensed social workers following graduation.

The amendments added to H.B. 2434 and passed on the floor of the House muddy this solution by making it possible for any person awarded a degree in social work to be eligible for a temporary license. This falls far short of the intent of the original language, where a person would have to meet all qualifications for licensing under the provisions of the act. Under the floor amendments, it would be possible for a person who did not meet all the requirements for licensing to maintain a temporary license indefinitely. The simplest solution to this confusion would be to pass the bill as it was originally passed by the House Committee. In that form, it solves the problem of temporary licensing and does not create new ones.

Because H.B. 2434 is only one solution to the need for additional social work staff in SRS, the School of Social Welfare at the University of Kansas, the Kansas Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, the Kansas Council on Social Work Education, and other professional social work organizations have joined together with the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services to develop larger strategies for meeting the need for additional professional social workers. At the request of Secretary Barton, a

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special task force has been meeting regularly for the past two months to consider both short and long-range plans that will address these needs. These plans include recommendations about strengthening recruitment activities, creating career bridges within SRS so that workers can receive financial support while seeking social work degrees, and finding ways to enhance the working environment for social workers within SRS so as to retain the current professional work force.

I believe that the continued work of the Task Force will help SRS make substantial gains in attracting and retaining a strong social work staff. It is crucial that social work services within the public social service sector be supported and strengthened. There is a belief afoot that any one can do social work. However, the challenges facing the state of Kansas contradict that simple notion. Citizens of Kansas who must rely on public social services are among our most vulnerable: children, the frail elderly, those with long-term mental illness and people with physical disabilities. Dealing with their crises in living requires the best professional education available. The KU School of Social Welfare and the undergraduate social work programs in the state are committed to providing that. We are optimistic that our collaborative efforts with SRS will provide the long-range solutions needed to insure that all citizens of Kansas receive the knowledgeable, skilled, and caring service they require.

Testimony of Carl S. Myers, LCSW, President, Kansas
Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.

In the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee:
March 22, 1989

I am Carl Myers, assistant professor of social work at Washburn University, and the current president of the Kansas Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. The Kansas Chapter of NASW is a professional association representing a membership of over 1400 social workers in the State of Kansas.

The Kansas Chapter of NASW is opposed to HB2434 in its present form. We endorsed the bill as amended and passed by the house public health and welfare standing committee, and would urge this committee to restore the bill to that version.

The intention was to allow a qualified applicant to obtain a temporary license, prior to taking the required written examination, and be available for immediate employment as a professional social worker.

As initiated, and later amended and passed by the house committee, HB2434 would accomplish these objectives in a timely manner, making it possible for the applicant to obtain a temporary license to practice and be on the job for SRS within a week of their graduation.

The current language would remove from BSRB an important public accountability function by eliminating any review of educational standards, and eliminating any criteria for a "social work degree". This language would, in effect, mean that a person with a mail order social work degree could apply for and receive a temporary, and later permanent license to practice social work, at any and all levels of practice.

I don't personally know of any mail order social work degree plans in existence. I believe most social work degrees in the country are in fact from reputable academic and professional training programs who meet national accreditation standards. However, there may be a number of creatively packaged "social work-like" undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Under present law, there is provision for such programs to be evaluated and approved or disapproved according to well-defined professional educational standards.

Why eliminate an important function and responsibility of a state regulatory agency with such a direct and potentially harmful impact on public protection?

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This bill was initiated to address a part of the problem regarding the present needs for SRS to recruit licensed social workers.

The Committee of the Whole amendments to HB2434 do nothing to speed up the process of recruiting social workers for SRS. The present version of HB2434 has the effect of lowering professional standards in social work at all levels of practice, and in all public and private settings. It is an issue of making decisions on a purely quantitative rather than a qualitative basis, at the expense of public protection and accountability.

I believe the pressing nature of the social work staffing needs of SRS is indeed real, but, recently created, and short-term.

In large part, the increase in social work staff positions have been created by the newly established Kan-Work program. This program is a major effort to address serious social barriers which entrap people into poverty. It is more comprehensive in its scope and emphasis on direct social services, and may have a significant impact on the quality of lives and circumstances of living for thousands of woman, children and families in the state. The program's success, or lack of it will largely depend on the quality and skills of the staff providing those services.

The need to fill vacant social work positions is our problem, too. As a profession, we are especially aware of the results of inadequate resources to address complex, and difficult personal and social problems. We are very mindful of the need to increase competently and responsibly provided direct social work services to individuals' and families.

The short-term need to fill positions in SRS does not justify lowering standards in social work.

The "recruitment problem" is not a problem for the estimated 200 Spring graduates from eleven approved social work programs in Kansas. To them "recruitment problem" means "job opportunities." For my students, it represents an exciting professional career opportunity not seen for more than a decade.

Finally, I think it is interesting to note how the issues involved in this bill are perceived as different problems.

Some view the problem as a shortage of qualified licensed social workers who are available for employment. Others

concede that there are sufficient numbers of professionally trained social workers, but the problem is that licensing laws or procedures are overly restrictive. Others prefer to view the problem as a recruitment challenge for SRS, and there are still others who view the problem more as a retention of staff issue for the agency.

Each of these perceptions of the problem have some validity. There are numerous issues which need to be addressed, non-legislatively, in order to resolve them.

Other testimony will illustrate the promising collaborative efforts between SRS and the professional social work community, as they are working together to resolve the present and future social work staffing needs of SRS.

HB 2434, as amended and approved by the house committee on public health and welfare, would address a part of this overall problem, while other parts of the problem are better addressed through other means.

I urge the committee to restore the bill in that form, and would then urge its favorable consideration.

Testimony to the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

March 22, 1989

HB 2434

By

Kathryn W. Spragens, Director
Department of Social Services
The University of Kansas Medical Center

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I am here this morning to support the passage of HB 2434 and to address some professional concerns over the House floor amended version of the bill that you have in front of you.

It is my understanding that Representative Schriver, who proposed the floor amendments to HB 2434, indicated his intention in making those amendments to the bill was to facilitate an increase in the number of social workers in the state of Kansas. While I concur and endorse the need for more professional social workers, I do not believe this should be accomplished by legislative mandate. Surely, we must not sacrifice the quality of the services delivered to the citizens of the state of Kansas. We recognize a number of other professionals do provide social services: for example, social workers do not have a sole claim on counseling services. However, issues of the population that public social services address are broad and complex and require the skills and expertise acquired through social work education and training.

I believe the original intent of this bill, as proposed by the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board and recommended by the House Public Health and Welfare Committee, was to alleviate some of the unnecessary barriers to obtain licensure by qualified social workers who were not current residents of this state nor employed by the state of Kansas. As an employer, I am hesitant to offer a position to a social worker that has not been issued a temporary social work license in the event they are unable to sustain a background check or provide three references. Also, they may not be academically qualified or not able to meet other current licensing criteria. This bill as originally proposed would allow temporary licensure for otherwise qualified social workers who wish to move to the state of Kansas.

The elimination of the word "direct" supervision by a licensed social worker should not be considered. Social workers representing our state work with some of the most difficult of problems that people face. These people deserve honest, ethical and appropriate professional social work.

I believe this can best be monitored, supported and enforced through "direct" supervision of temporary licensees by a licensed social worker.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to speak on H.B. 2334. My name is Jacque E. Gibbons. I am the director of the Social Work Program at Kansas State University and I am speaking on behalf of the Kansas Council on Social Work Education which represents all ten of the Council on Social Work Education accredited baccalaureate social work programs in the State of Kansas.

That part of H.B. 2334 as amended by the House Committee of the Whole which is causing concern is Section 4 (h), lines 206 to 235, having to do with temporary permission to practice social work. The need for some policy on temporary permission to practice social work is not in question. What is in question is the nature of the policy which regulates that temporary permission. This question arises because we correctly understand that the policy selected will affect the outcome obtained. The outcomes we seek, and thus the policies we implement, will in large measure be determined by how we perceive the problem.

The bill under consideration here appears to address a problem different than that addressed by the original bill. The original bill was intended to provide the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board with the authority to grant applicants, who otherwise appear to be eligible, a one time permit to practice social work, pending the results of the licensing examination. This change would meet the needs of the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board to provide flexibility in moving people into social work practice. The key here is the reliance on the social work licensing examination to assure that the minimum statutory competencies for social work practice in the State of Kansas are met.

The bill as amended by the House Committee of the Whole moves away from this policy in a number of significant ways. First, it changes the wording of the bill to provide a temporary "license" as opposed to a temporary "permit." This is a subtle difference that in the original bill served to highlight the temporary nature of the permission to practice social work. Second, the current bill provides that an application is a demand for temporary permission to practice social work which must be honored rather than a privilege. This seems to remove the notion of regulation from the temporary permission function of the Behavioral Science Regulatory Board. Third, it appears that the current bill would not limit the number of times a person could apply for temporary permission to practice social work. Thus, it is conceivable that persons who never pass the social work licensing examination, and, thus, never demonstrate their competency to practice social work, could continue to do so on a "revolving" temporary permission. Fourth, and most important, the current bill provides that any person who is once issued a temporary permission to practice social work must be considered eligible for a regular license even though that person has not completed "a social work program recognized and approved by the board" (lines 99-103 in the current bill). Neither does the current bill appear to require that the "social work degree" be from a college or university that is accredited. The implications of this change are unknown, but they may be far

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reaching. For instance, an unaccredited college or university may simply combine a few existing courses to produce a "social work degree." There may also be the potential for community colleges to grant a "social work degree" since the bill does not clearly specify baccalaureate or masters degree. The bill has the potential to provide a much inferior "second tier" educational standard for licensed social work in the State of Kansas which is at variance with the existing legislation and the standards of the social work profession as defined by the National Association of Social Workers and the Council on Social Work Education.

My opening remarks suggested that policies emerge from the outcomes we desire, and these, in turn, are influenced by how we perceive the problem. What, then, are the outcomes of this bill, and by extension, what are the problems addressed by this bill?

This bill as amended, and the original bill, are intended to provide some flexibility in getting people temporary permission to practice social work in Kansas. As such, it addresses a problem we all agree needs to be resolved. The current bill, however, goes considerable further by providing mechanisms which broaden the categories of people who can obtain permission to practice social work in the State of Kansas, including those who never demonstrate the minimum statutory competencies, or education, which were previously established by the legislature. If this is an accurate conclusion about the outcome of this bill, what may we infer is the problem, or problems, addressed by it?

It seems to me that broadening the categories of people who can obtain permission to practice social work primarily addresses the problem of the supply of social workers. Should we conclude that there are not enough licensed social workers in Kansas? Some people, I suspect, would strongly disagree with that conclusion. Others, most notably some of those who work in the Kansas Social and Rehabilitation Services, would agree with that conclusion.

If the problem to be addressed by this bill is to increase the supply of licensed social workers for the Kansas Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS), then I would argue that this approach may create more problems than it solves. In my six years as a direct services worker and supervisor with SRS, I came to appreciate the complexities of the human problems confronted by that agency, and the absolute necessity for a high degree of professionalism on the part of its staff. Increasing the supply of licensed social workers for SRS in the manner proposed by this bill runs the very real risk of impairing that professionalism, and further endangers the children, the families, and the elderly with whom SRS staff work. We should not lower our standards for social work professionals to increase the supply of people to whom the citizens of Kansas, through their regulatory board, give the designation of "Licensed Social Worker." In the final analysis, it may be the degree of SRS staff professionalism which makes the difference between the alleviation of difficult human problems and the litigation of gross human tragedies.

According to Secretary Barton, SRS experiences 15 to 20 percent turnover in its social work staff each year. That means

over 100 new social workers need to be hired each year. That is more than half of all the baccalaureate social workers who will graduate from the ten accredited social work programs in the State this year. Some of the area offices of SRS experience a much higher rate of social work staff turnover which, by its very magnitude, suggests serious problems internal to SRS.

Social work programs are working with SRS on these issues. This semester Kansas State University has 24 social work majors in field placements who will graduate this Spring. Fourteen (nearly 60 percent) are with SRS. Many will undoubtedly take jobs with SRS if the opportunity arises. In addition, over the last several years, we have developed a KSU social work component on the campus of Fort Hays State University to provide social work education to people indigenous to central and western Kansas. That program is growing and presently has over 35 identified majors. Many of those, after graduation, will work for SRS in places that SRS has had difficulty recruiting people.

Recruitment problems can not be separated from retention problems. If staff are retained, then recruitment is not needed. We think that the supply of social workers for any agency can be addressed by that agency making the job content and/or the salary competitive. I must tell you that most of the students I talk with are more concerned with what they will do as social workers, than they are with how much they will be paid as social workers. I do not intend to minimize the need to make social work salaries competitive with other similar civil service classifications.

There are some alternatives which should be explored before the social work licensing legislation is altered as significantly as that proposed in this bill. A more thorough examination of the consequences of the proposed changes should be pursued than can be accomplished in these brief discussions. The joint work of SRS and the accredited Kansas social work programs currently in progress should be evaluated. In addition, SRS might consider a return to stipends for social work students, this time including undergraduate stipends which include an agreement to work in those area offices which are currently experiencing the most severe retention problems. My own experience with an SRS stipend for graduate school suggests that it does work. Other alternatives may emerge from work between the accredited social work programs and SRS.

I encourage you to adopt the bill as originally written, and direct a further examination of the need for more significant changes prior to making additional changes in the social work licensing legislation.

· SABETHA ·

Open for Expansion

March 16, 1989

Honorable Don Montgomery
Kansas Senate
State Capital Building, Room 128-S
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear Don:

On the 13th I wrote to Dick Eckert concerning a House bill I feel will have an adverse effect on small communities, and Sabetha in particular.

Dick called me and said the bill has now passed the House and is now in the Public Health and Welfare Committee of the Senate.

The bill is H.B. 2049, Certification of EMS Dispatchers. I am certain that Sabetha is not unique in the combining of jobs for the most effective utilization of tax dollars.

In a city of our size it is impossible to have full time dispatching for emergency services, and due to our location in two counties and three telephone exchanges impractical to contract with the Sheriff's Department for dispatching.

In light of this we have established our own emergency dispatching service for Police, Fire and Ambulance in conjunction with the Sabetha Electric Plant, which is manned 24 hours a day. We have an emergency number which is easy to remember (2111), and have the capability of transferring the call to any office or the hospital if necessary. And, we have inhouse training of our personnel for the handling of emergency calls.

The mandating of dispatcher certification would in all probability be a detriment to the residents of the Sabetha area as it would be impossible to certify our plant personnel as EMS Dispatchers. This would apparently leave two alternatives. The first is to have EMS Dispatching handled by the privately owned EMT Service. The second would be to contract with the County Sheriff Department for Emergency Medical dispatching. With either alternative it means that Sabetha Area Residents cannot call one number for any emergency service, and in the case of contracting with the sheriff, would mean a long distance call for Ambulance service.

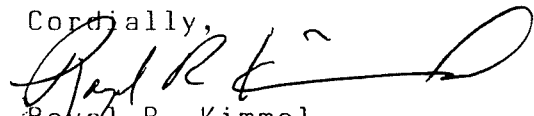
CITY OF SABETHA, KANSAS

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SPHAW
3-22-89
Attachment 6

I believe the intention of the bill is good, as training is important for proper medical response, however given the fiscal restraints of small local governments it will have the effect of providing a poor quality of response to emergencies.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Royal R. Kimmel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Royal R. Kimmel
City Administrator