



House Taxation Committee

March 1, 2023

Proponent- HB 2306

Chairman Smith and members of the House Taxation Committee:

Thank you for your consideration of HB 2306. My name is Monica Kurz, and I am the Vice President for Policy & Prevention at Kansas Suicide Prevention HQ (KSPHQ). KSPHQ has a 54- year history of providing crisis support to people experiencing mental health crises and struggles with suicide. We started as a grassroots response to the needs of youth in Lawrence, KS., but have grown our staff and programming to meet the increasing needs for suicide prevention services across the entire state. We are one of four 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline crisis call centers operating for Kansas; providing primary coverage for calls from 103 counties in Kansas and backup coverage to Johnson and Sedgwick counties. We are the only crisis contact center to offer text and online chat support for the entire state.

KSPHQ also serves as a resource center for suicide prevention statewide. Through this program we provide an array of trainings to support evidence-informed strategies for individuals, professionals, and organizations to improve their suicide prevention and intervention services. KSPHQ also contributed to the writing of the Kansas State Suicide Prevention Plan and are active members of the Kansas Suicide Prevention Coalition which launched in September 2021. This work is supported through grants from state agencies such as the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services and Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

KSPHQ is a 501c(3) non-profit with an operating budget of just under \$5 million dollars. Our sales tax liability for SFY 2023 is estimated to be \$60,000. Two of our largest funding sources are the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) and Douglas County Government. KDADS is funding our organization to operate the 24/7, 988 crisis line with monies allocated from the State General Fund. KSPHQ is requesting sales tax exemption status to avoid paying tax on taxpayer funding. These monies can be reinvested into service delivery to the people of Kansas. While the whole amount of our sales tax expenditure is not a large proportion of our budget, it is equivalent to over 3,300 hours of counseling hours on our hotline.

I am happy to respond to any questions at the appropriate time.

Submitted respectfully,

Monica Kurz

Vice President for Policy & Prevention

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