

Testimony on the Budget for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment

Submitted To

Senate Ways and Means Committee

By

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On behalf of the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments (KALHD), I appreciate the opportunity to provide this written testimony on the FY2026 budget for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE).

Specific to our 100 local health departments, I ask you to include the following in your budget recommendations.

- 1) **Continue the budget proviso that establishes a \$12,000 minimum allocation to local health departments.** For the past few years, the Legislature has included a proviso to increase the minimum amount of the state assistance allocation (K.S.A. 65-242) for local health departments from \$7,000 to \$12,000. The necessary proviso language is included in H.B. 2007 and I ask for your support to sustain that language. Failure to sustain this proviso would result in a budget cut for half (51 of 100) local health departments who receive only that base amount of assistance.
- 2) **Sustain staffing and grant management infrastructure in the KDHE Local Public Health program \$504,978.** The regional public health specialists (5 FTE) provide a vital link between local health departments and KDHE. A link that supports increased coordination and collaboration between state and local government and other public health partners who are working together to strengthen and improve the public health system in Kansas. The KGMS data system supports the process for local health departments to apply for, and if awarded submit required grant reports to KDHE. Failure to sustain this infrastructure could delay awarding of funds, interrupt services to the citizens of Kansas, and increase county administrative costs.
- 3) **We support the proposals presented to you by the Johnson County Department of Health & Environment (JCDHE).**
  - a) Establish an uncompensated care program in the amount of \$1,580,000.
  - b) Increase funding for tuberculous (TB) control efforts by \$96,000.

c) Add \$100,000 to the Aid to Local Public Health Department statutory formula as an inflationary increase over the past 12 months.

- 4) Increase in Medicaid rates for dental services \$16.9 million SGF (\$44.3 million all funds).**  
Untreated dental problems can lead to severe infections, chronic pain, and even cardiovascular disease, all of which can negatively affect an individual's health and well-being. We support the recommendations of the 2024 Special Committee on Sedation Dentistry and join with Oral Health Kansas and other stakeholders to offer our support for increasing access to dental care using the strategy of paying dental providers a competitive rate for their services.

Thank you for your work and for your continued support of local health departments.