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Wm. Jeff Kahrs, Interim-Acting Secretary

Sam Brownback, Governor

SB290 Testimony

Proponent

January 24, 2012

Chair Vicki Schmidt and Members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee:

This written testimony from Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) is offered in support of SB290. SRS worked closely with the Kansas Association of Addiction Professionals and the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board and supported the adoption of the Addiction Counselor Act in 2011. This action resulted in SRS no longer credentialing addiction counselors.

SRS has closely followed the discussions of the committee convened by the BSRB and subsequent proposed changes to the Act. These changes include:

1. To allow those currently licensed in Kansas as a psychologist, specialist clinical social worker, clinical professional counselor, clinical psychotherapist, or a clinical marriage and family therapist, who has provided an attestation from a professional licensed to diagnose and treat substance abuse disorders in independent practice stating the applicant is competent to diagnose and treat substance abuse disorders, has passed an examination approved by the Board, and has satisfied the Board that the applicant is a person who merits the public trust, to apply and be granted licensure as Licensed Clinical Addiction Counselor (LCAC).
2. To allow those who are currently licensed in Kansas as a baccalaureate social worker, has completed a minimum number of semester hours of course work on substance abuse disorders, has passed an examination approved by the Board, and has satisfied the Board that the applicant is a person who merits the public trust, to apply and be granted licensure as Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC).
3. The removal of the word psychologist in the new section (E). Since psychologists already have the professional right to diagnose and treat at the clinical level, this group does not want to be included as an exception for the LAC level.

These changes seem reasonable but SRS would not support any additional changes. The proposed changes will hopefully allow more qualified individuals to be licensed by the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board and to provide quality services for those individuals with substance use disorders.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide support for SB290.