



February 12, 2013

**Written Testimony to the Committee on Health and Human Services in Support of  
HB2184-A State Plan for the Comprehensive Treatment of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary  
Disease**

Dear Chairman Crum and Members of the Committee;

On behalf of the COPD Foundation I respectfully submit these comments **in support of HB2184** which would require the secretary of health and environment to create a state plan for comprehensive treatment of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

The COPD Foundation is the not-for-profit organization solely dedicated to representing individuals with COPD in the United States. COPD is an umbrella term used to describe progressive lung diseases including emphysema, chronic bronchitis, refractory asthma, and some forms of bronchiectasis.

In Kansas, 6.6 percent of adults, approximately 142,000 individuals, reported having COPD in 2011, and the National Institutes of Health estimate that approximately half of all individuals with COPD have not yet been diagnosed. In individuals with household incomes under \$15,000, the prevalence of COPD rose to 14.5 percent of adults. COPD is the third leading cause of death nationwide and its severe impacts among women, working age individuals and underserved populations further add to the impetus to act.

Chronic diseases like COPD are a growing burden on the health and productivity of Kansas residents. HB2184 would mark an important step towards addressing COPD in Kansas through the creation of a state plan. Despite being the nation's third leading cause of death, COPD is not a categorically funded disease within the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Chronic Disease Division. As a result, COPD does not receive the attention it deserves within most state public health initiatives, further contributing to the rising morbidity, mortality and costs associated with the disease.

As with many other chronic diseases, there are proven methods to reduce costs and improve health status. Through preventive efforts such as tobacco cessation and worksite wellness programs, early and proper diagnosis, pharmacotherapy management, non-pharmacotherapy strategies like pulmonary rehabilitation and oxygen therapy, and

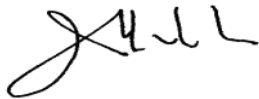
comprehensive health management and education, most patients with COPD can be treated.

The COPD Foundation has lead the creation of several state COPD coalitions, public-private partnerships with the mission of developing and coordinating the implementation of a comprehensive COPD state action plan that creates and supports programs and policies to prevent COPD and reduce the burden of the disease in the state. The COPD Foundation is committed to supporting Kansas' efforts and working with local state organizations like the Kansas Society for Respiratory Care, throughout the creation and eventual implantation of the state COPD plan.

Kansas can become a leader in finding common sense solutions to the skyrocketing costs and quality of life issues associated with chronic diseases like COPD. HB2184 sets the standard for other states to follow in recognizing the need to address this major, mostly preventable and often treatable, chronic disease and integrate it into the overall public health framework.

The COPD Foundation strongly expresses support for HB2184 and urges the committee members to take action against all chronic diseases to improve the lives of Kansas residents now and into the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J Walsh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "J" being particularly large and stylized.

John Walsh  
President  
COPD Foundation