

March 7, 2013

Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare

Chair: Honorable Sen. Mary Pilcher-Cook

Re: In Support of Senate Bill 217

Madam Chairwoman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Shaun Moore and I am here to present the views of one of many that comprise the future of Social Work and young professionals that look to serve Kansans in need. I, like my fellow students at both the Bachelor's and Master's level, believe in the Social Work ideals that in order to provide the best and most efficient and effective services we must address the problems of the whole person. I am currently finishing my Master's work and am completing my practicum studies at the VA where I am learning to provide Social Work services that run the gambit of psychosocial needs of my clients. Many of which have multiple co-occurring diagnoses, and many that are struggling with substance addiction in its various forms. Many of my fellow students are in similar positions and faced with the reality that providing Social Work services in the area of addictions is a necessary component of our work, as most who are afflicted with addiction are also afflicted with dual-diagnoses as well. We are the future of the safety net that Kansans will rely on when they are looking for someone to turn to for help in this state. The current policy, that requires us to acquire, and maintain a secondary license to be eligible for employment in a state certified facility to provide this essential Social Work service is an unnecessary burden on future Social Workers whom have already invested so much. This blatantly disregards the work and diligence we have engaged in to be ready to enter this workforce as beginning practitioners. Myself, as well as many of my fellow students, are engaged in providing Social Work services in addictions now as part of our educational process. We are ready to faithfully take on the responsibility of meriting the public trust and to perform our duties competently in our roles as Social Workers.

Secondly, when speaking to the efficiency and efficacy of care for Kansans, Social Workers are uniquely suited to provide cost effective care. Addictions Counselors are restricted to working specifically with the addiction and not the whole person. As Social Workers we are trained and educated to treat the whole person within their entire set of psychosocial needs. As is accepted among the many disciplines substance addictions occur most often in the presence of another co-occurring disorder. We are able to work beyond the specific addiction and treat the person as a whole. We have the knowledge, and continue to commit ourselves to our professional development to treat those in need of our services with the best comprehensive treatment modalities. As Lieutenant Governor Colyer has stated many times, we must move away from the idea of creating silos to achieve comprehensive integrated healthcare. We do not need more silos when we are focusing on creating an efficacious system in our great state.

In conclusion I would ask that you pass this SB 217, to allow a qualified and dedicated workforce to be utilized, and to break down the barriers to comprehensive care to Kansans. Thank You.