

Testimony in Support of HB2319

Health and Human Services Committee

March 18, 2015

Sister Therese Bangert, Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth

Our Community, the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth have been involved in caring for the sick since our arrival in Kansas in 1858. We opened St. John's Hospital in Leavenworth in 1864. Our history tells a compelling story of 5 men being brought to the newly opened hospital and laid down in front of it. The men while hunting buffalo had been caught in a blizzard. Their injuries were severe – causing amputations and death. Our Sisters nursed them in their agony. This healthcare ministry to Kansans continues to the present day.

Our Church teaches the importance of healthcare to human dignity.

As a ministry of the Roman Catholic Church, Catholic health organizations commit to: promote and defend human dignity; attend to the whole person; care for poor and vulnerable persons; promote the common good; act on behalf of justice; steward resources; and act in communion with the church. (Catholic Health Care Association)

We are mindful of those who are uninsured in Kansas

- **Over 60% of them ages 19-49**
- **53% of them having incomes below 138% of FPL**
- **65% live in household where one-adult works full-time**
- **11 counties in Kansas have an uninsured population of 23% and above.**

(Facts from Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City)

Pope Francis in his teaching Joy of the Gospel says

I beg the Lord to grant us more politicians who are genuinely disturbed by the state of society, the people, the lives of the poor. It is vital that government leaders and financial leaders take heed and broaden their horizons working to ensure that all citizens have dignified work, education and healthcare.

I pray that you will be those politicians through expanding KanCare and thus granting access to healthcare to uninsured Kansans.

Sister Therese Bangert
636 Tauromee
Kansas City, Kansas 66101
913-321-9400
treetop20@juno.com