



Children's Alliance of Kansas, Inc.

627 S.W. Topeka Blvd., Topeka, Kansas 66603

www.childally.org (785) 235-5437

Christie Appelhanz, Executive Director

Gordon Docking - KidsTLC, Inc.
President

February 13, 2017

Christie Appelhanz, Executive Director
Children's Alliance of Kansas
In support of HB 2180
Before the House Committee on Appropriations

Chairman Waymaster and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2180. Children's Alliance represents 19 private, nonprofit member agencies that coordinate child welfare activities and programming across Kansas to strengthen families. The four percent Medicaid reimbursement rate reduction has impacted access to care for our state's most vulnerable youth and placed additional burdens on the already stressed child welfare system. We believe HB 2180 is a good step to maintaining an adequate health care provider network for children.

Receiving less than the cost of providing care has created an undue financial hardship on KanCare providers.

When KanCare was implemented, the Administration in Kansas repeatedly stated the program would improve access to health care and allow the state to avoid cutting provider rates. With these cuts, the opposite is true. The four percent Medicaid reimbursement rate reduction has resulted in some of our 19 member agencies scaling back operations and questioning whether they can afford to continue participating in a program that pays less than the cost of providing care.

Access to care for our most vulnerable children and families is threatened.

Under federal statute, children receiving Title IV-E foster care and adoption assistance are categorically eligible for Medicaid, a program known as KanCare in Kansas. These children and adolescents represent a population with unique health care needs who depend on Medicaid for an array of physical, behavioral, and social treatments. Without a suitable network of KanCare providers for children in foster care, access to care is threatened and results in vulnerable Kansans seeking care in hospital emergency rooms.

Increasing the HMO privilege fee will help ensure access to care and prevent economic and job losses in Kansas.

Child welfare agencies are important health care providers who respectfully ask that you support HB 2180 so that moneys in the medical assistance fee fund are used to restore reductions initiated during 2016 to provider rates. The health care needs of youth in child welfare are vast and often compounded by their circumstances. This bill can help ensure vulnerable children get the care they need while preventing economic and job losses for Kansas communities.