

## **Neutral Testimony on HB 2047**

### **House Health and Human Services Committee**

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Kansas Department of Health and Environment**

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Chairman Hawkins, Vice Chair Concannon and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning House Bill 2047. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) is neutral on HB 2047, which would move the KanCare Inspector General position to the Kansas Attorney General's office.

KDHE desires transparency for KanCare. Among our priorities, transparency comes second only to excellent patient/consumer care.

While KDHE has worked diligently to fill the Inspector General position, there has been a lack of suitable candidates for this crucial position. As a result, it has been vacant since June 2014. Repeated efforts to recruit a qualified candidate have not been successful.

If it is the will of the Legislature to move the Inspector General to the Attorney General's office, KDHE will support that change.

However, there has been a discussion about possible changes to the KanCare Ombudsman. KDHE is open to additional discussion on this topic, but at this point KDHE believes the Ombudsman best serves the interests of KanCare beneficiaries as an independent entity residing within the existing structure of KDADS.

As has been evident in the Ombudsman's quarterly and annual reports to the Legislature, this position in its current location has provided exemplary, committee service to thousands of beneficiaries and resolved a high percentage of concerns. In addition, a working volunteer program has been created to expand those efforts and serve more consumers.