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**House Committee on Health and Human Services
February 1, 2017
Pat George, President / CEO, Valley Hope Association**

Good afternoon Chairman Hawkins, and Members of the Committee. This testimony is submitted in support of House Bill 2106.

As a non-profit organization with locations in seven states with 16 facilities, Valley Hope supports this bill. Over the last 35 years, Valley Hope has solicited The Joint Commission accreditation for all of our facilities in our continuum. In the healthcare arena, this accreditation is one of the esteemed accreditations and organizations that are awarded it are held in high standard throughout the industry.

When an organization seeks The Joint Commission accreditation, they must meet rigorous standards which are renewed every three years. In general these standards are more stringent than state regulations, but also mirror a lot of the same requirements. Therefore, if an organization would be given "deemed" status in the state if they have achieved The Joint Commission accreditation, this would allow for less time spent from management (both locally and corporate) on these inspections instead of treating individuals in our facilities. In addition to savings of time, this would also allow for financial savings. As Valley Hope is a charitable organization, any financial savings allows us to assist more individuals with the chronic disease of Substance Use Disorder.

Our organization has been given "deemed" status in Arizona, Missouri, Nebraska and Texas. We have experienced this process to be an efficient and effective way to continue our national accreditation and state licensing.

Valley Hope applauds the Kansas Legislature in their consideration of allowing institutions that have already achieved a national accreditation to focus on their business without having to go through an additional licensing process by the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony today.