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Testimony In Support of House Bill 2106

House Committee on Health and Human Services

Chairman Hawkins, and Members of the Committee,

I am Dulcinea Rakestraw, Vice President of Treatment Services at Preferred Family Healthcare, Inc. a community-based health care organization that offers a range of services in Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Illinois. I am providing written testimony today on behalf of my company regarding the issues related to substance abuse treatment license requirements in House Bill 2106.

My agency has been internationally accredited through the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) since 2009. Through our adherence to CARF standards we have been able to implement quality improvement processes throughout our multi-state agency. The use of these standards has assisted us in developing processes to ensure that services we are providing are of the highest quality, regardless of the location of those services.

We believe that if passed House Bill 2106 will allow us to even further streamline our processes, so that we can focus on providing services to those in need without the undue burden of making minor changes in order to meet varying state requirements. Additionally, as a nonprofit agency, we believe that “deemed” status would allow us to utilize fewer resources on making changes to our electronic health record (EHR) system in order to meet specific state requirements, and instead invest our funds directly in services and programs that impact the consumers we serve.

As an employee of an agency that is accredited, I can share some of the reasons why accreditation is an important component of a high quality service delivery system. Specific benefits that accreditation affords include:

- Assurance to persons seeking services that a provider has demonstrated conformance to internationally accepted standards.
- Improved communication with persons served.
- Person-focused standards that emphasize an integrated and individualized approach to services and outcomes.
- Accountability to funding sources, referral agencies, and the community.
- Management techniques that are efficient, cost-effective, and based on outcomes and consumer satisfaction.
- Evidence to federal, state, provincial, and local governments of commitment to quality of programs and services that receive government funding.

“Supporting Healthy Lifestyles”

- Guidance for responsible management and professional growth of personnel.
- A tool for marketing programs and services to consumers, referral sources, and third-party funders.
- Support from the accrediting body through consultation, publications, conferences, training opportunities, and newsletters.

In addition to the benefits to providers and consumers, there are several benefits to the state. Those include: assurance that programs are thoroughly reviewed on a regular basis at all levels from policies, personnel practices, environmental conditions, and clinical services; ability to adapt the requirements for accreditation on an annual basis in accordance with the best practices of the industry; and allowing deemed status will allow for a reduction in state staffing costs associated with KDADS staff completing on-site audits of programs already demonstrating compliance with accreditation.

Additionally, deemed status will encourage providers to seek accreditation that improves public safety by ensuring programs are not simply meeting the minimum standards set out by the state, but demonstrating a higher standard of care.

We support House Bill 2106 for substance abuse treatment providers in order to provide the same efficiencies, costs savings, and administrative burden relief to as was previously passed in in a similar statute for accredited community mental health centers.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our support. I am happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.

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