

January 30, 2017

TO: House Health and Human Services Committee

RE: HB 2124 and Psychiatry

Chairman Hawkins and Members of the Committee:

My name is Walter Hill and I am the Executive Director of High Plains Mental Health Center. High Plains provides comprehensive mental health services to residents in a 19,000 square mile rural and frontier region of Northwest Kansas. A critically important resource to serve our 5000 plus patients in our region each year is the availability of qualified psychiatrists, both Adult and Child trained. I have been involved in recruitment and retention of physician psychiatry staff for 25 years and have found that incentives such as loan repayment programs are very helpful to attract and retain quality psychiatrists to serve patients in our healthcare shortage area.

I would like to encourage the committee to support HB 2124 efforts to include psychiatrists in state incentives for physicians in order to assist in the recruitment of these essential resources for our region and other similar regions in Kansas.

Sincerely,



Walter Hill, MS, LMLP, LCP
Executive Director