

Neutral Testimony on:

HB 2124

Presented to:

House Health and Human Services Committee

By:

*Denise Cyzman, Executive Director
Kansas Association for the Medically Underserved (KAMU)*

For additional information contact:

KAMU • 700 SW Jackson • Topeka, KS 66603 • (785) 233-8483

Mister Chairman and Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide neutral written testimony on HB 2124.

The Kansas Association for the Medically Underserved (KAMU) is the Primary Care Association of Kansas, representing 44 primary care safety net clinics, all providing services regardless of the patient's ability to pay. KAMU and its members believe Kansas should be a state where all individuals have access to comprehensive, affordable, and quality health care. In 2016, KAMU member clinics served more than 261,000 patients during almost 788,000 visits.¹

The Kansas Medical Student Loan Program (KMSL) was established by the State of Kansas to encourage students to practice in primary care medicine in areas of need. The KMSL assists students with costs such as tuition and living expenses.

We are supportive of any statute that makes it easier for Kansans to access health care. We understand there is a need for psychiatrists in many parts of the state; in fact, many of our clinics have a need for a psychiatrist. We do have concerns with adding general psychiatrists and child psychiatrists to the list of specialties eligible for the KMSL. Currently, there is only a fixed amount of money available for the KMSL program. If more and more specialties become eligible for the repayment loan program, then the size of the pool will decrease, thus undermining the goals of the program.

To that end, we would like to propose the idea that if the list of specialties continues to grow for the loan repayment program, then the Kansas Legislature should add more money to the Kansas Medical Student Loan Program. This will ensure access to all and will continue to allow the program to achieve its goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak about HB 2124 and how it affects safety net clinics.

Denise Cyzman
Executive Director

¹ KAMU Quality Reporting System, State Grantee Preliminary Data, 2016. Accessed on 1.29.17.