



My name is Steve Brunk and I'm here representing the Family Policy Alliance of Kansas. We regularly communicate with thousands of individuals and families across our state.

Additionally, Family Policy Alliance works in conjunction with over 40 Policy Councils across the country to promote a state and nation where God is honored, religious freedom flourishes, families thrive, and life is cherished. **To that end, we are here today as a proponent of HB 2031.**

When someone we love faces the fear of a terminal diagnosis—and all the emotions and decisions that come with it—more than ever, they need to know that we believe their life is worth fighting for.

Some states, including Colorado and Washington, D.C. most recently, have voted to abandon those with terminal illnesses to hopelessness and death through assisted suicide. There are far better options for Kansans with the most serious illnesses than this. Palliative care is one legislators should consider.

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization describes palliative care as “patient and family-centered care that optimizes quality of life by anticipating, preventing, and treating suffering. Palliative care throughout the continuum of illness involves addressing physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual needs to facilitate patient autonomy, access to information and choices.” Palliative care focuses on treating the **person**, as well as the disease, and helps provide support and inclusion for family members.

Palliative care improves quality of life and survival, and creates care efficiencies that curb costs. Unfortunately, there are often barriers to getting patients with serious illness access to palliative care. These include:

- Lack of knowledge and understanding about palliative care;
- Variability in access based on geographic location, physician training, and services offered;
- Inadequate workforce to meet the needs of patients and families;
- Insufficient research to guide and measure quality of care.

HB2031 helps identify specific barriers in Kansas preventing access to palliative care for

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patients with serious or long-term illness. It also establishes a palliative care consumer and professional information program ensuring that comprehensive and accurate information about palliative care is available to the public. By passing **HB 2031**, Kansas legislators will be taking a significant step towards helping our sickest patients get access to the best care for them and their families.

Let's work together to make sure those with the most serious illnesses in our community know we're not giving up on them.

They are worth fighting for.

Thank you.

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