



To: House Health and Human Services Committee

From: Jon Rosell
Executive Director

Date: February 7, 2017

Subject: HB 2064; concerning KanCare expansion

The Kansas Medical Society appreciates the opportunity to submit these brief comments on HB 2064. In short, KMS continues to support KanCare expansion as outlined in HB 2064.

For many years, the Kansas Medical Society has supported public policies that promote Kansans' access to affordable and comprehensive health care. To the extent that private health insurance is either unaffordable or unavailable due to health or employment status, public programs such as KanCare should provide such coverage. The benefits of reliable health insurance and thus access to health care are indisputable. Better primary and preventive care, screening for cancers, high blood pressure and other chronic illnesses, as well as early identification and treatment of diseases, will improve health outcomes of Kansans, reduce disability and suffering, increase productivity and ultimately save Kansas tax dollars.

HB 2064 has the potential to cover up to an estimated 144,000 uninsured, childless adults, many of whom are employed, or seeking employment. Additionally, HB 2064 will strengthen our state's network of community hospitals which are vitally important to Kansas physicians, nurses and citizens alike. Our society expects our physicians and hospitals to care for uninsured Kansans, but their ability to do so is increasingly threatened without the support that will be made available through this legislation.

We believe HB 2064 to be a carefully balanced, fiscally responsible approach to extending coverage to a large group of low-income, uninsured individuals. We respectfully urge your support of the bill. Thank you.