



Tom Bell
President and CEO

TO: Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

FROM: Chad Austin
Senior Vice President, Government Relations

DATE: January 23, 2018

RE: Senate Bill 195

On behalf of the members of the Kansas Hospital Association, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments in support of Senate Bill 195. The proposed legislation would create a new suspended eligibility status under the Kansas Medicaid program for certain recipients.

Access to health care coverage is essential for many individuals to address health care needs once they are either discharged from a state behavioral hospital or incarceration. Oftentimes, these individuals have pressing health care concerns that, left untreated, may increase the likelihood of readmission or recidivism. At present, the state of Kansas terminates the Medicaid eligibility of any individual that is admitted into the state behavioral hospital or correctional system. Once released, the individual must re-apply and re-enroll into the Medicaid program. Besides making it more difficult for the individual to obtain needed health care services, termination of benefits creates an administrative burden that requires the state to process a new application and verify the person's eligibility. Several states have implemented policies that allow the individual's Medicaid eligibility to be placed in a "suspended" status until the discharge or release from a state behavioral hospital or correctional system. These states have the advantage of promptly reinstating a person's Medicaid eligibility, thus reducing an individual's impediment to obtaining necessary health care services.

The Kansas Hospital Association believes Senate Bill 195 allows individuals to receive timely, needed care following discharge from a state behavioral hospital or correctional facility. The ability to do this is likely to result in reduced readmissions and recidivism. Thank you for the opportunity to share our comments.