

January 26, 2018

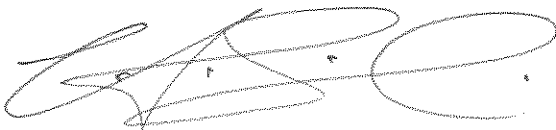
To: Chairwoman Schmidt and Members of the Senate Public Health & Welfare Committee
Re: Testimony in Support of House Bill 2031: Establishing the Advisory Council on Palliative Care and Quality of Life and palliative care education program.

As a palliative care physician and researcher who resides in Shawnee, KS, and works at the University of Kansas Health System in Kansas City, KS, I want to give my full support of House Bill 2031, and I hope you strongly consider positive action to move this bill forward to passage.

I have dedicated my career to palliative care and spend most of my days delivering care to patients and their families one by one in outpatient clinics and the hospital. And while our outpatient service increased our number of visits from just over 1,000 in 2016, to over 1,500 in 2017, I recognize we are not seeing all of the people who could benefit from palliative care. Throughout my career, patients and families speak of frustrations that they had not access palliative care sooner in their illness.

And so I have taken it upon myself to make sure that outside of clinical time, I work hard to increase palliative care access, so that I may help patients who I may never meet. To this end, I am the editor-in-chief of Pallimed, a website that has over 50,000 followers across multiple social media platforms sharing good news and research about the field. I have also founded and hosted weekly chats on Twitter to promote the research and impact of hospice and palliative care. Also, I have served the National Academy of Medicine on behalf of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine, to help improve the quality of care for people with serious illness, visiting Washington DC many times each year to meet with leaders of insurance companies, health systems, and patient advocacy groups. In addition, I have been proud to serve the medical specialty as president of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine from 2016-2017. I share this to demonstrate my words are backed up with action, when I say that more people need to be informed about palliative care and the opportunities to improve their quality of life even when they are facing advanced disease. Just like the work I have shared above, I support House Bill 2031 because it will help consumers and professionals know more about the availability and benefits of palliative care across the plains of Kansas.

House Bill 2031 will also bring together great minds across the state to establish an advisory council, which will draw on the latest evidence-based research, the experience of clinicians, and the voice of patients to ensure palliative care to create solutions for Kansas. We have great foundations to begin with, and with House Bill 2031 becoming law it will improve the quality of life for the great people of Kansas when they find themselves facing serious illness.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christian Sinclair', written in a cursive style.

Christian Sinclair, MD, FAAHPM

Shawnee, KS