



**Board of Directors**

Sonja Armbruster  
Wichita State University

Chip Blaser  
Douglas Co. Community Found.

Frank D. Clepper, Jr.  
Amerigroup Kansas, Inc.

Barb Conant  
Kansas Advocates for Better Care

Janette Delinger, RDH, MSDH  
Kansas Dental Hygienists' Assoc.

Robyne Goates  
Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Kansas

Krista Hahn, RDH, MBA, ECP III  
Marian Dental Clinic

Schaunta James-Boyd  
EC Tyree Health and Dental Clinic

Alexandro Martinez  
KCU – Score 1 for Health

Steve Peppes  
Delta Dental of Kansas

Kevin Robertson, MPA, CAE  
Kansas Dental Association

Nick Rogers, DDS  
Rogers Family Dentistry

Amber Sellers  
EN Engineering

Becky M. Smith, DDS  
UMKC School of Dentistry

Brian Smith, E.D.  
Galena School District

Lissa Staley  
Topeka & Shawnee Co. Public Library

**Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee  
February 8, 2018**

Chairwoman Schmidt and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of SB 316. My name is Christi Nance and I am the Policy Director for Oral Health Kansas, Inc. We are the statewide advocacy organization dedicated to promoting the importance of lifelong dental health by shaping policy and educating the public so Kansans know that all mouths matter. We achieve our mission through advocacy, public awareness and education. Oral Health Kansas has over 1,400 supporters, including dentists, dental hygienists, educators, safety net clinics, charitable foundations, and advocates for children, people with disabilities and older Kansans.

Tobacco use has a significant impact on both oral and overall health. We know that smokers are about twice as likely to lose their teeth as non-smokers. Smoking leads to reduced effectiveness of treatment for gum disease, as well as increased risk of mouth pain, cavities and gum recession which leads to tooth loss. Following tooth loss, it's often difficult to fight chronic diseases such as diabetes as it can become difficult to eat solid food. Tooth loss can also impact your jaw bone causing it to shrink, weakening neighboring teeth until they collapse.

Although nonsmokers and even smokers understand the negative consequences of tobacco use, it is an addiction. It is hard to quit and often involves several attempts. Oral Health Kansas supports an increase in tobacco cessation for Medicaid recipients to allow them the opportunity of additional quit attempts in a given year, along with access to counseling services. Tobacco cessation programs are an effective method of treating tobacco dependence, and the combination of using counseling and medication are more effective than using either one alone. Providing these services will not only improve the health of consumers, but could also save the state millions in tobacco-related illnesses.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 316. We urge the Committee to vote in favor of it.

800 SW Jackson, Suite 1120  
Topeka, KS 66612

785.235.6039 (phone)  
785.233.5564 (fax)  
info@oralhealthkansas.org

www.oralhealthkansas.org