



To: Chairwoman McGinn, and Members, Senate Ways and Means Committee  
From: Rachel Monger, Vice President of Government Affairs  
Date: March 23, 2017

### **Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 235**

Thank you, Chairwoman and Members of the Committee. I am Rachel Monger, Vice President of Government Affairs for LeadingAge Kansas, the state association for not-for-profit aging services. We have 150 members across Kansas, which include not-for-profit nursing homes, retirement communities, hospital long-term care units, assisted living, homes plus, housing, low-income housing, home health agencies, home and community based service programs, PACE and Meals on Wheels. Our members serve more than 25,000 elders each day.

We are speaking to the Committee today in support of Senate Bill 235, and its preservation of the state and municipal-owned adult care home exemption from the Personal and Family Protection Act. The current exemption allows each adult care home to decide their own weapons policies, and we believe it is important to continue leaving that choice with the homes and the people who live and serve in them.

Although the nursing homes that fall under the Personal and Family Protection Act are technically publicly owned, they are not public buildings or facilities. As their name indicates, they are in fact, homes. For the last two decades nursing homes have worked hard to move away from a medical model, and into a home-based model of care. It is called "person-centered care," and our members are national leaders in it. When our homes bring in a new caregiver, the first thing they are taught is: The residents you care for do not live at your work. You work in their home. Every decision and action made by the caregiver revolves around that fact.

We understand, and have great respect for, the safety and constitutional arguments underlying our concealed carry laws. However, we also believe those arguments must be balanced against another fundamental right to control what happens in the spaces where we live and call home. State and federal laws state very clearly that residents of nursing homes are United States citizens with all of the rights therein, and they surrender none of those rights when they cross the threshold of a nursing home. All of us have the right to decide if, when, and how we want weapons to enter our homes. Residents of nursing homes must not be treated any differently.

Therefore, we respectfully request the committee to support SB 235, and to allow the people who live and serve in state and municipal-owned adult care homes to continue making decisions for themselves on weapons policies.

Thank you so much for your consideration of this issue, and we are always available for questions.