



Kansas Hospital
ASSOCIATION

TO: House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Audrey Dunkel, Vice President of Government Relations
Tara Mays, Vice President of State Legislative Relations

Date: January 19, 2021

RE: Senate Bill 14

The Kansas Hospital Association (KHA) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments in support of Senate Bill 2014 on behalf of our 122 community hospital members.

Kansas hospitals continue to serve on the frontlines in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The flexibilities implemented in 2020 HB 2016 have allowed hospitals to address staffing shortages, maintain safe access to care for patients, and make necessary adjustments to the provision of care to keep patients safe without fear of legal repercussions. Our hospitals are grateful for the support you provided to the healthcare community last spring. Unfortunately, since you last passed HB 2016 in June, the COVID-19 situation has not improved. Continued regulatory and statutory flexibility remain critically important as we continue on the path toward pandemic recovery.

The continuation of the telemedicine flexibilities provided in Section 7 of the bill are crucial to maintaining access to care as we push through what we hope will be the last few months of the pandemic. These flexibilities have made it possible to care for patients at high risk for COVID-19 infection to receive care without exposing themselves to a waiting room full of sick people. It has helped maintain the healthcare workforce by allowing providers to quarantine and still provide care to their patients via telemedicine when appropriate.

Additionally, Sections 8 and 9 of the bill have regulatory flexibilities that hospitals have found invaluable for addressing the most recent surges in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. As staffing has become more challenging, hospitals have utilized the flexibilities related to emergency licensure and the use of healthcare students where appropriate to maintain services for Kansans across the state.

The continuation of these flexibilities is vital to a successful 2021.

Thank you for your continued support of Kansas hospitals.