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Testimony: SB 137 – Expedited Occupational Licensing (Neutral)

Senate Commerce Committee

February 23, 2021

By: Chad Johanning, MD, FAAFP, President (Written only)

Chairman Olson and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present these written comments to you today. The Kansas Academy of Family Physicians (KAFP) is supportive of expedited licensure for veterans and military spouses, *to the extent that the state's licensing standards, as well as the safety and protection of Kansas's citizens, are not diminished.*

While KAFP does not support the bill in its entirety, we do recognize and appreciate the efforts made to improve provisions related to physicians and the Kansas Board of Healing Arts (KBOHA) from similar legislation proposed last year – particularly the requirement of a *substantially equivalent standard* for licensees that better ensures the safety and protection of patients in our state.

However, we are concerned that the bill opens the opportunity for other healthcare professionals' scope of practice to be determined by the applicant's originating state's licensure. **We recommend an amendment to SB 137 that would also require a *substantially equivalent standard* for applicants to the Board of Nursing and the Board of Pharmacy.**

KAFP acknowledges the delicate balance that necessarily exists between regulation and the primary role of government to protect the health and safety of its citizens. If there is to be a tipping of the balance in the area of health care and medicine, we believe it must fall on the side of protecting the health and safety of Kansans.

While KAFP understands the spirit of this bill, we believe the particular nature of health care delivery and the need to protect the health and safety of patients in Kansas sets health care professions apart from other professions covered in this legislation.

About Kansas Academy of Family Physicians:

KAFP represents over 1,820 active, resident, student and life members across the state. *The mission of KAFP is to support and serve family physicians of Kansas as they advance the health of Kansans.* Quality health care and health outcomes for our patients guide our public policy work. As family physicians, we see people of all ages, both men and women, and we work with almost every type of ailment and illness that afflict our patients.