

House Judiciary Committee Meeting

House Bill 2477

Chairman Rakestraw and Members of the Committee,

I want to thank the committee for taking immediate action addressing the desperate need to help with the staffing needs in the 60 long-term care facilities we operate across the state of Kansas. Our residents are the top priority and require care 24/7 in their home environment that we provide. We experience daily staff resignations from the exhaustive hours, constant testing, inability to pass a health screen resulting in less hours worked, and the backlog of license classes and renewals which has contributed to the current state of crisis.

With the appreciation of the action, we would also request that this timeline be extended. The firm expiration of May 15, 2022 will not allow time for our industry to recover and our experience with the previous emergency order expiration only left our facilities having to fill big staffing gaps while only having more work to do to try to keep our staff and residents healthy. Hopefully we are nearing the end of this pandemic, but we will need more time to stabilize and reform to adjust to better programs to employ Certified Nurse Aids, Certified Medication Aides, and Nurses in our facilities. We would like to take this opportunity to begin analyzing the future of the staffing education and competency to work in the long-term care industry and provide more employment opportunities for Kansans. My ask would be that this bill be in place until next legislative session where it can either be renewed or replaced with a reform bill promoting on the job training programs and certifications.

I would like to end my comments the way I began them and that is to reiterate to you just how grateful I am at the response of the state government to assist us in our staffing crisis. Your interventions today will help tremendously.

Sincerely,

Jim Klausman

CEO

Midwest Health, Inc.