

Date: January 29, 2022

From: Andrew Regoli, RN

Ref: Support for excluding fentanyl test strips from the definition of “drug Paraphernalia in HB2277”

Senate Judiciary Committee

Chairwoman Warren and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon, Chairwoman Warren and Members of the Committee. My name is Andrew Regoli. I am a Registered Nurse (RN) practicing in Wichita, Kansas. I am also a fourth year MD candidate at the University of Kansas.

I am writing regarding HB 2277, and the opportunity to update the amendment law therein to exclude Fentanyl test strips from the list of banned items. I am hopeful that my learned colleagues in addiction medicine have been consulted and discussed the technical aspects and population implications of Fentanyl testing, and so I would like to take this opportunity to speak on a more human level.

Drug use is a pandemic in its own right, and the insidious infestation of Fentanyl has accelerated how lethal this problem is by an order of magnitude. Good, hard-working Americans are falling victim to poisoning from Fentanyl. It is being pressed into pills that resemble other substances. When a person takes a pill, there is a confidence that it has been manufactured correctly; that the contents are as advertised. In so many cases now, this assumption is proving fatal.

A typical story a patient will tell me is that they suffered an accident at work (often in Aircraft manufacturing), were treated with opioid medication but then abruptly cut off by their healthcare provider. Then, in that painful, sweating, miserable desperation, sometimes they accept medication from families or friends to stave off the horrific withdrawal. Because of undetected Fentanyl contamination, the pills they are given could prove fatal in a matter of minutes.

Allowing people to test for Fentanyl is a net win for Kansas, because it could save the lives of Kansas residents. Right now Kansas hospitals are bursting at the seams with patients. Kansans are often struggling to get the help they need because of how overrun Emergency Rooms are. Taking a simple measure like enabling Kansans to test for Fentanyl could help cut down on overdose admissions, and make a small step toward helping this overload, helping not just those who struggle with addictions or chronic pain, but the population as a whole.

Thank you for your time,

-Andrew Regoli, RN, MS4 KUMC-W