



Testimony of the **Kansas Public Health Association** to the
Kansas Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare
Opponent for SB 212 • **March 22, 2021**

Chairman Hilderbrand and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition to SB 212.

Listing and therefore limiting required vaccines in statute, as proposed in SB 212, would serve to delay protection of Kansas citizens from preventable diseases and would add a layer of politicization to vaccinations, a proven public health strategy. And while this bill authorizes the Secretary of Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) to remove vaccines deemed no longer necessary/safe, the bill removes the Secretary's ability to require immunizations as needed. Public health professionals at KDHE are the best prepared to follow changes in the science related to immunizations and vaccination schedules. As such, the Secretary of Health and Environment, supported by the public health experts at the agency, is most appropriately equipped to determine needed changes to vaccine requirements for schools and daycares. By removing the regulatory authority of public health experts at KDHE to determine vaccination requirements, SB 212 risks Kansas' ability to respond to the best scientific recommendations for immunizations as set forth by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) is a group of medical and public health experts that develops recommendations on how to use vaccines to control diseases in the United States. ACIP meets multiple times annually. ACIP recommendations inform decisions about which vaccines should be required for children in Kansas schools and childcare. We oppose this bill and are in favor of the KDHE Secretary retaining the flexibility and authority to respond to new vaccines as recommended by the ACIP as part of the routine child and adolescent vaccination schedule.

In summary, we **oppose SB 212**. KPHA is in favor of KDHE's Secretary retaining the flexibility and authority to be responsive to new vaccines recommended by the ACIP. Thank you for the opportunity to present our concerns.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brandon Skidmore, President
Kansas Public Health Association

KPHA is a professional association for Kansas public health practitioners, professionals, and advocates. As a voice for public health, KPHA provides a forum for individuals and organizations to work collectively to assure conditions in which Kansans' lives will be healthy. *(This position reflects the collective position of association members through the action of the Board of Directors and may not necessarily reflect the views of each KPHA member's employer.)*