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Testimony as Opponent of SB303
Committee on Federal and State Affairs
March 29, 2021

Good morning Chairman and Members of the Committee.

My name is Jennifer Sourk and I am providing written testimony to you today on behalf of Midwest Health and its 47 Kansas long term care facilities which cares for more than 2,000 residents living in adult care homes which is in strong opposition of SB303.

Adult care homes are regulated by either the state of Kansas through KDADS or the Federal government through CMS. These regulations are enforced regularly through the survey process and the Administrators and Operators of the adult care homes are trained and tested to meet exceptionally high standards to ensure they comply with the regulations.

The standard of care for infectious disease must be met by any healthcare provider and the healthcare provider may not waive such policies and procedures for the protection and safety of its residents and staff members. If an adult care home does not follow these protocols, it has a potential for devastating results as the infectious disease may spread to others who have not signed such a waiver. With the unique nature of community housing such as adult care homes, a communal living setting with shared living spaces increases the risk of the spread of infectious disease. This risk increase as we care for our most vulnerable population.

While adult care homes would love to host visitors and continue for our resident to have close contact with the ones that they love the most, we have embraced the situation by accommodating and host visitations through windows, Facetime or other tablet video sessions and events such as vehicle parades. When the weather is acceptable, there is even an ability to host visits outdoors with a clear screen so even masks could be removed. A few of our adult care homes were able to assemble a plexiglass door with two holes with arm extensions so that loved ones could hug the resident. The creativity of staff to allow the most access for conversations and safe visits during this time has been impressive. Through creativity and preparation for any event in the future, we strongly believe that modify visits can continue while following infectious disease standard of care to protect our seniors.