



To: Senate Public Health & Welfare Committee  
From: Denise Cyzman, CEO, Community Care Network of Kansas  
RE: SB 407  
February 17, 2022

Chair Hilderbrand and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity for Community Care Network of Kansas to submit written testimony in support of SB 407, making technical changes to the Kansas Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). I am Denise Cyzman, Chief Executive Officer of Community Care. We are a statewide association serving 34 health centers and community-based clinics across Kansas. Clinics in this network serve anyone, with a specialty of providing care to the most vulnerable and underserved Kansans. In 2020, our network provided more than 82,000 Kansas children with whole-person care including medical, dental, mental health, substance use disorder, pharmacy, and enabling services to meet transportation and other social and economic needs.

Community Care supports SB 407. The changes this bill makes are largely technical in nature, correcting an error made in 2008 that progressively eroded the number of children eligible for CHIP each year. Kansas is the only state with language referencing a specific year for federal poverty level (FPL) for CHIP. Other programs referenced in Kansas statute do not tie the FPL to a specific year. This statute is the exception – and it needs fixed. Since the federal government adjusts the poverty guidelines annually as the cost of living increases, holding income limits steady at the 2008 FPL has the effect of annually reducing CHIP eligibility relative to the poverty level. Carrying forward this error means that the effective income limit for 2021 was at only 225 percent of FPL. Census data show that more than 47,000 children in Kansas live in households with incomes between 225 and 250 percent of the FPL, and are therefore not eligible for CHIP benefits. As costs continue to rise, this eligibility limit will get progressively lower, and the number of children unfairly denied eligibility will continue to grow.

Due to this outdated statute, many Kansas families miss out on CHIP coverage for their kids. This not only puts a strain on families, it also forces state-funded health clinics in the Community Care Network to stretch scarce resources. These clinics provide care regardless of their patients’ ability to pay. Increasing the number of families without health coverage for their children means that clinics increase the amount of uncompensated care they provide. Correcting this error allows clinics to utilize their resources to serve more patients and expand the services provided to communities. This bill is good for Kansas children. Good for Kansas families. And good for Kansas.

Thank you for your consideration.