

## MINUTES OF THE SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jim Barnett at 1:30 p.m. on March 10, 2009, in Room 136-N of the Capitol.

All members were present.

## Committee staff present:

Nobuko Folmsbee, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
Doug Taylor, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
Kelly Navinsky-Wenzl, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Terri Weber, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Jan Lunn, Committee Assistant

## Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Dr. Robert St. Peter, Executive Director, Kansas Health Institute  
Edie Snethen, Kansas Association of Local Health Departments  
Marvin Stottlemire, Kansas Public Health Association  
Secretary Roderick Bremby, Kansas Department of Health and Environment

## Others attending:

See attached list.

Informational Briefing on the **Current and Future State of Health in Kansas**

Dr. Robert St. Peter, Kansas Health Institute, was introduced. He provided testimony on the role of the public health system in Kansas, and distributed his testimony (Attachment 1). He began his testimony by discussing the high infant mortality rate in the United States, the health costs per capita in the United States are twice as much as other industrialized countries, and what the United States should expect for this investment. Health care systems are not set up to discover, implement, or pay for prevention; public health is the linchpin. Dr. St. Peter submitted that the primary crisis in health care is the unsustainable increase in health care spending and until reasons for health care costs are discovered, the cause of the problem will remain undiscovered. All participants in the public health system: local health departments, state health departments, federal public health agencies, and non-governmental partners must collaborate to ensure positive results and outcomes for health care in Kansas and the United States.

Edie Snethen, executive director of the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments, was introduced to speak concerning the role of local health departments in the current and future of public health. Ms. Snethen indicated that local health services provide an entry point for many linking services in addition to a data collection point. Her testimony included information about state and local health department accreditation to advance the quality, performance, and accountability of state and local public health departments. She reviewed information related to local health department revenues and described resource challenges, capacity challenges, and challenges related to small or rural Kansas counties and the potential for public health regionalization for small/underserved/frontier Kansas counties. (Attachment 2)

Marvin Stottlemire, chair of the Legislation & Issues Committee, Kansas Public Health Association, discussed the change in public health using new and different tools (Attachment 3). He stressed the importance of spending money where the problem is, not where the money is available. Mr. Stottlemire indicated the mission of public health is changing. He emphasized that chronic disease management has replaced challenges of years ago (i.e., clean water, polio, measles, etc.).

Secretary Roderick Bremby, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, was recognized. Secretary Bremby introduced Dr. Jason Eberhart-Phillips, the new public health officer for the State of Kansas. Dr. Eberhart-Phillips made a few brief comments.

Secretary Bremby highlighted the evolution of public health, discussed the "Healthy Kansans 2010" initiative, reviewed health disparities in Kansas, described the public health system, reported on regional cooperation among health departments, reviewed the public health accreditation process, and provided insight into the current state of public health preparedness. (Attachment 4)

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Minutes of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee at 1:30 p.m. on March 10, 2009, in Room 136-N of the Capitol.

Senator Barnett called members' attention to the minutes which had been previously distributed. Senator Brungardt moved to accept the minutes of February 10, 11, 12, and to amend the minutes of February 16 to indicate Senator Haley was present and not absent; Senator Schmidt seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm

The next meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2009.