

March 13, 2023

## Written Neutral Testimony for HB 2277 before the Appropriations Committee

Chair and Honorable Committee Members,

The Kansas State Board of Healing Arts (“Board”) submits this neutral testimony to assist legislators in evaluating HB 2277. I am Susan Gile, Executive Director of the Board. The Board is the executive body tasked with licensing and regulating 16 healthcare professions in Kansas. See K.S.A. 65-2801 *et seq.* The Board is composed of 15 members, 12 of whom are licensed healthcare professionals from various professions, including eight licensed physicians, three chiropractors, one podiatrist, and three public members. The statutory mission of the Board is patient protection.

Since the beginning of the pandemic (March 2020) and continuing today, the Board has had difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified staff to work for the Board. This has been an issue for many state agencies as well as private entities. The Board has worked with our internal Human Resources Manager and with the Department of Administration to find creative and innovative ways to make working for the state and the Board attractive and appealing. The Board believes a flexible work environment facilitates the most positive working situation for our staff. To that end we have been able to offer:

- A hybrid work environment
- Paid onsite parking
- Birthday leave
- Administrative leave for successful recruitment efforts which result in the hiring of new staff
- First day eligibility for health care benefits

Some of these are general state benefits and some are more specific to the Board. The Board concurs with the general provisions of HB 2277. The Board believes raising the annual amount for a bonus to \$10,000 per person and the ability to use a bonus for hiring, recruitment, and retention is a positive action which will likely help in our recruitment and retention of qualified staff.

The Board has a few concerns with the bill as written. The Board is concerned the use of the monetary awards could be skewed to the larger state agencies which receive state general funds and federal grants, possibly making them a more attractive employment opportunity. While the Board realizes and accepts Cabinet agencies have some advantages that non-cabinet agencies do not, this bill may serve to widen the gap. Some suggested changes are below:

- The Department of Administration creates a recruitment and sign on bonus fund with State General Funds to be used for all state agencies.

- Department of Administration staff should work with staff from both Cabinet and Non-Cabinet agency staff to create criteria for how the funds will be used. It may be appropriate to have one fund for Cabinet agencies and one for non-cabinet agencies.

I welcome any comments, questions, or further dialogue with member of the committee. Please feel free to contact me at (785) 296-3680 or via email [Susan.Gile@ks.gov](mailto:Susan.Gile@ks.gov). Thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony.

Sincerely,



Susan Gile  
Executive Director

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