



To: Chairwoman Caryn Tyson and Members of the Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation

From: David Jordan, President and CEO, United Methodist Health Ministry Fund

Date: January 18, 2023

RE: SB 55 Back to School Sales Tax Holiday

**Chairman Tyson and Members of the Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation:**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment on SB 55, which creates a four-day sales tax holiday for families purchasing back-to-school items.

The United Methodist Health Ministry Fund (Health Fund) is a 37-year-old, \$60-million health philanthropy located in Hutchinson. Our mission is to improve the health of Kansans. We focus on three strategic areas—access to care, early childhood development, and Healthy Congregations, a program aimed at addressing community health by engaging churches throughout Kansas.

Early education and education are critical to improving the health of all Kansans. School supplies are critical to ensuring all Kansans are able to learn and thrive. Unfortunately, record inflation is making it tougher for Kansans to afford necessities like back-to-school supplies.

This proposal will bring down costs for Kansas families by providing direct relief as they are preparing to return to school. Beyond benefiting Kansans, the proposal will keep Kansas retailers competitive with surrounding states that have similar sales tax holidays.

As an organization, we support sustainable tax and financing policy. This proposal will boost spending and the local economy and will save families money. It is estimated this proposal will save Kansas families \$6.5 million per year, which translates to saving Kansas families close to \$20 million over three years.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide written comment on SB 55 and the need to take implement a sales tax holiday that improves the educational experience for families, saves families money and boosts our local economy. Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can be of assistance.

