



**Written Opposition Testimony on SB 391
Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare
February 15, 2024**

Chairwoman Gossage and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition to SB 391, which would limit the activities of the secretary of health and environment related to public health functions and repeal statutes relating to the secretary's authority to quarantine individuals. The Kansas Public Health Association (KPHA) is a professional organization that represents more than 800 public health practitioners, healthcare providers, researchers, advocates, and other professionals working together to build a healthier Kansas.

SB 391 would undermine the ability of public health officers to use crucial, evidence-based strategies to limit the spread of infectious diseases in their communities. Disease prevention measures like isolation and quarantine are fundamental public health practices that allow local health officers to quickly combat the threats raised by infectious diseases. These measures keep communities across Kansas safe from the negative impact of harmful diseases like polio, measles, and whooping cough. Removing the authority of local health officers to effectively utilize their expertise and prevent the spread of infectious disease puts the health and safety of Kansans at risk.

As such, KPHA supports the current authority of the Secretary of Health and Environment and local health officers to mitigate the spread of infectious diseases and protect the health of their communities. We encourage the Committee to vote NO on SB 391 and maintain the current statute.

Respectfully submitted,

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