



March 14, 2005

Representative Morrison, Chair

House Health and Human Services Committee

Good afternoon Chairman Morrison and Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Alyce Brown and I am a volunteer with AARP. I am the Regional Volunteer Director for the Dallas Region of AARP, which covers a ten state area that includes Kansas. As a lifelong Topekan and a caregiver, I am happy to be here to represent the views of our more than 350,000 members here in my state. Thank you for this opportunity to express our support for HCR 5011 and caregivers of Kansas. Long-term care and caregiving are high priority issues for AARP Kansas.

“Family caregivers” refer to people who provide long-term care services and support to family members, friends, relatives and neighbors. “Unpaid caregivers”, which often include family members and friends, refer to people who provide care without pay.

In the 2004 AARP survey “Caregiver in the U.S., Spotlight on Kansas” it was estimated that 445,900 adults in Kansas, 22 % of the total population, provide unpaid care to a relative or friend 18 or older.

These caregivers are a diverse group. Their caregiving experiences range from those that are relatively easy to those that are burdensome. We know that being a caregiver makes those who carry the heaviest responsibilities vulnerable to risk associated with poorer health, emotional stress and economic hardships.

As the baby boom generation ages over the next 25 years, the ranks of those needing care will increase and the numbers of those available to provide care will decrease. Future caregivers may feel they have even less choice about becoming a caregiver or caregivers may have to provide care for two, three or more recipients. This will greatly increase the caregiver burden.

AARP believes that unpaid caregivers deserve our attention and our assistance by:

egin to plan for the future regarding needed
services for the long-term care population.

As a step in recognizing the efforts of those who carry out the primary role of the unpaid caregiver, we respectfully request that you support Kansas Caregivers by supporting HCR 5011. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Respectfully
