

KAC *Kansas Alliance for Caregivers*

555 S. Kansas, Suite 201, Topeka, KS 66603 785/234-1363 866/448-3619 www.kansasallianceforcaregivers.org

AARP Kansas

March 14, 2005

Aldersgate Village

Center for Practical Bioethics

Good afternoon Chairman Morrison and members of the House Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Ernest Kutzley and I am the Chair of the Kansas Alliance for Caregivers. Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments in support of HCR 5011.

East Central Kansas Area Agency on Aging

Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging

The *Kansas Alliance for Caregivers (KAC)*, which includes key stakeholders from state and private entities, was formed in 2003 following a comprehensive home and community based long term care study conducted by the University of Kansas for AARP Kansas.

Kansas Advocates for Better Care

The study included the recommendation for more comprehensive statewide support for caregivers. The AARP Foundation, which received funding from the Administration on Aging to assist states with forming caregiver coalitions, selected Kansas as its first state to provide the training in building caregiver coalitions.

Kansas Association of Area Agencies on Aging

Kansas Department on Aging

KAC's mission, to promote public awareness about caregiving and advocate for support and services to enhance access and availability of resources for current and future caregivers, has led the Alliance to develop the following goals:

Kansas Foundation for Medical Care

Identify the needs of caregivers in Kansas and complete an inventory of caregiver services in order to develop a one-stop outreach program and resource guide;

Kansas State University

Create a comprehensive educational campaign around the many facets of caregiving;

Midland Day Programs

Pursue legislative initiatives that will enhance the availability of caregiver services and supports.

Midland Hospice

Office of Aging & Long Term Care, University of Kansas

During the past year the *KAC* has created caregiving brochures and a website which showcase member organizations and services they provide. These aids have been designed as a one-stop information center to assist Kansas professionals and caregivers in understanding how best to utilize the resources in their communities.

Dr. Ernie Pogge Caregiver

In another 2003 survey conducted by AARP, an estimated 445,900 adults in Kansas, or 22 percent of the adult population, provide unpaid care to a relative or friend over 18 years of age. Of that group, 74 percent are over 50 years old, and 49 percent are over the age of 75. These findings reflect the growing population of Kansas seniors who require care and the growing population for caregivers who care for them.

KAC Vision-Kansans are recognized, valued, and supported as they fulfill their caregiver role

Caregivers assume this role based on a commitment of dedication and an obligation to a loved one. They share one optimal goal – to assure that their loved ones receive the best care while maintaining the best quality of life possible.

During the past several years I have had the opportunity to be both a primary and secondary caregiver for two lovely ladies and close friends. Both Edith and Maude were in their late 80s and lived independently. It was both a privilege and challenge, while working full time, to provide assistance to both of these ladies to insure that they could safely remain in their homes and continue to live independent as long as possible. I am very glad to have had these experiences.

Former First Lady Roselyn Carter stated that there are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are caregivers, those who will be caregivers and those who will need caregivers.

Therefore, on behalf of *KAC* we would like to thank this committee for introducing this resolution and respectfully request that you vote in favor of HCR 5011 as a step in recognizing the efforts of caregivers in Kansas.

Thank you,
Ernie Kutzley