



Public Health
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Testimony of **Barton County Health Department** to the
Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee
Proponent for SB 252 • **January 18, 2020**

Chairman Suellentrop and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to supply written testimony in support of Senate Bill 252 regarding expanding medical assistance eligibility. As a local health department, we are not a major recipient of Medicaid dollars, but we often work with those populations that rely upon the Medicaid system and will benefit from this expansion bill. This opportunity to expand Medicaid is the catalyst for Kansans to work together to ensure that ALL Kansans have access to healthcare.

SB 252 will make tremendous strides in providing insurance coverage to Kansans currently without. Local health departments like mine are often seen as a vital safety net to a community. However, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation¹ the safety net system does not close the access gap for the uninsured population. In other states, expansion has provided significant growth in health centers and their service capacity. Such growth in non-expansion states since the Affordable Care Act passed has happened but in a more limited fashion.

Safety net providers, like the local health department, have limited resources and service capacity. Insurance permits citizens to access care in a compensated manner that reduces stress on the safety net system. It is for these reasons that the **Barton County Health Department** supports SB 252 and asks that you recommend it favorably.

Respectfully,

Shelly R. Schneider, BSN, RN
Administrator
Barton County Health Department