



Kansas Sheriffs' Association

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Testimony to the Committee on Public Health and Welfare
Proponent to SB 252 Medicaid Expansion in Relation to County Jails
January 24, 2020

Committee Members,

The Kansas Sheriff's Association submits testimony as a proponent of SB 252.

The language as written in SB 252 Section 11 related to county sheriff's having access to Medicaid coverage for inmates is supported by the KSA. This provision will allow the county jail to leverage federal Medicaid dollars to reduce the costs to counties. Medical costs of prisoner care can be devastating when expensive hospitalization for medical conditions are encountered, especially when a rural county is responsible for those costs.

As an example of why the KSA is supportive of this bill, the Sedgwick County Sheriff's office had an inmate in 2018 with extremely expensive medical bills. The overall bill was over \$900,000.00. The local hospital provided the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office the Medicaid rates. The cost to local tax payers was \$545,000.00. This could have just as easily occurred in a rural county with a small tax base.

If SB 252 were to pass, the money spent on this one inmate would have a substantial impact on local tax payers. The entire bill of \$545,000.00 would have been paid for by Federal dollars and not solely local tax payer dollars. The KSA believes this would in turn relieve the Sheriffs of budgetary pressures that occur when inmates are in our custody, need medical assistance, bound by law to provide the medical expense, but do not have a budget to pay for the expenses.

These medical costs will ultimately come from tax dollars. This bill would allow those tax dollars to come from the much larger national tax pool than from limited county property tax resources.

The Kansas Sheriff's Association is a proponent of Section 11 of this bill as written. We thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

Sheriff Jeffrey T. Easter
Legislative Chair for the Kansas Sheriff's Association