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Dear Members of the House Insurance Committee,

We at Valley Hope Association appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today regarding HB 2834, which pertains to the transfer of responsibilities for the State Employees Health Plan (SEHP) from the Department of Administration to the Department of Insurance.

Valley Hope Association has been providing substance use disorder treatment to individuals with various insurance plans for over 50 years, within the state of Kansas. Over the years, it has become increasingly apparent that the current oversight of the SEHP may have led to possible violations of parity laws. These violations have resulted in individuals with the SEHP overseen by the Department of Administration, being denied coverage for substance use disorder services that are typically covered under other insurance plans and recognized by the American Society of Addiction Medicine. This disparity in coverage not only undermines the principle of equal access to healthcare but also places undue financial and emotional burdens on those state of Kansas employees and their dependents afflicted by this disease.

We firmly believe that the Kansas Insurance Department possesses the necessary knowledge, expertise, and regulatory framework to rectify these potential parity law violations effectively. By transferring the oversight of the SEHP to the Department of Insurance, we trust that individuals under the SEHP will receive the appropriate coverage mandated by federal parity laws.

Ensuring compliance with federal parity laws is not just a legal obligation but also a moral imperative. Every individual, regardless of their insurance coverage, deserves equal access to necessary healthcare services. We are confident that the expertise of the Kansas Insurance Department will enable the state of Kansas to fulfill its obligations under federal parity laws while providing comprehensive and equitable healthcare coverage to its employees.

In conclusion, we strongly encourage the committee to support HB 2834 and facilitate the transfer of oversight responsibilities for the SEHP to the Department of Insurance. This move will not only address potential parity law violations but also promote fairness and equity in healthcare coverage for all individuals under the state plan.

Thank you for considering our testimony on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Patrick Fields
National Director of Contracting and Revenue Cycle
Valley Hope Association