



CITY OF HAYSVILLE, KANSAS

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MAYOR

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March 4, 2024

House Committee on Welfare Reform
Hearing: Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 1:30 p.m.
Room 152-S

Re: Testimony in support of HB 2723

To Chair Francis Awerkamp and Members of the Committee:

I am supportive of the inclusion of \$40M in the Kansas Department for Aging & Disability Services (KDADS) budget to provide matching grants to communities to assist in addressing housing infrastructure needs. The availability of suitable housing plays a pivotal role in the overall health and independence of seniors and individuals with disabilities. Unfortunately, many individuals face significant challenges in accessing affordable, accessible, and safe housing options that cater to their unique needs. By allocating \$40M to the KDADS budget specifically for housing infrastructure, we can take a significant step towards addressing this pressing issue.

Investing in housing infrastructure not only supports the well-being of seniors and individuals with disabilities but also has broader positive effects on the community. Adequate housing options contribute to the social integration of these individuals, fostering a sense of belonging and community engagement. Moreover, it can reduce the strain on other social services by preventing unnecessary hospitalizations or institutionalizations.

In Sedgwick County, this grant funding will help the City of Wichita move toward creating a Multi-Agency Center (MAC) which will be a one stop shop for people experiencing anything from homelessness to domestic violence and human trafficking. With the support of the State, we will be able to address the issue of homelessness in Wichita and the surrounding areas. I urge you to prioritize the inclusion of \$40M in the KDADS budget to provide matching grants to communities to assist in addressing housing infrastructure needs. By doing so, we can make significant strides in creating a more inclusive, accessible, and supportive environment for our aging, disabled, and homeless population.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to witnessing the positive impact of this crucial investment in our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Russ Kessler', written in a cursive style.

Russ Kessler
Mayor