



Testimony in support of House Bill 2573
House Health and Human Services Committee
Anna Lambertson, Kansas Health Consumer Coalition
March 13, 2012

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2573, the KanCare Accountability Act.

My name is Anna Lambertson and I am the executive director of the Kansas Health Consumer Coalition (KHCC). KHCC is a statewide, non-profit organization with the mission of advocating for affordable, accessible and quality health care in Kansas. KHCC was formally launched in 2005 by consumer activists, advocates and foundations that joined forces to build common purpose and action among diverse groups, and to create a unified voice for uninsured and underinsured consumers.

I am providing testimony on HB 2573 because Medicaid matters. It matters for the nearly 330,000 Kansans who rely on Medicaid, and it matters for the families of some of our most vulnerable citizens who have peace of mind knowing that their children, parents and siblings can access important services.

KanCare has the stated goals of improving health outcomes for beneficiaries while also bending the cost curve of Medicaid over time. The goals of the KanCare proposal are laudable, but with so many Kansans currently being helped by Medicaid, it's important that we get it right.

Measures must be in place from the outset to ensure accountability and transparency for the vulnerable Kansans who rely on Medicaid for healthcare coverage. We believe that these important principles can be achieved in part through effective legislative oversight and access to timely data and analysis.

KanCare must be subject to legislative benchmarking and monitoring to ensure that KanCare achieves its intended cost savings without jeopardizing the quality of care or services for Kansans. A process establishing legislative oversight must commence without delay to ensure effective monitoring of the intended outcomes of KanCare. The Legislature should have access to timely data and analyses to evaluate consumer satisfaction and access to services over time.

An independent, annual audit of contractors under the state managed care plan, as outlined in HB 2573, is a good first step towards ensuring transparency and accountability for the hundreds of thousands of Kansans relying on Medicaid for health care coverage. Whether the audit is conducted by the Kansas Health Institute or another entity, we support the Legislature in requesting an annual performance audit of contractors.