

To: Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

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SB 160 - Health Department Accreditation

Chairwoman Pilcher-Cook and committee members, thank you for allowing me to testify today in SUPPORT of SB 160.

Background: There is currently a push to get local and state health departments “accredited”. This is a relatively new initiative and is a nationwide effort. The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) was created in 2007 to manage and promote this idea. Funding for the PHAB comes from the Federal government via the CDC (38%) and from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (62%). Currently, there are no accredited health departments but many have begun the process. The cost for accreditation ranges from \$12,720 to \$95,400, depending on the population size.

While the initiative is being marketed as a “quality improvement” opportunity, it is really about control and expansion of the federal government’s involvement into healthcare and our daily lives. This is an attempt to circumvent the State Legislatures in order to gain control of state and local health departments and to promote the progressive health care agenda through future grants and the requirements to obtain and maintain accreditation. Not only will this result in a loss of control but it will also lead to costly unfunded mandates that we simply can not afford.

All you need to do is follow the money to find out what the real agenda is about.

From a June 25, 2012 FoxNews article:

“Perhaps most influential was the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the largest philanthropy focused exclusively on health care. Long a backer of universal health care coverage, the foundation spent millions in the 90s backing state and national efforts to pass legislation expanding government-provided health care and even sponsored community forums in which Hillary Clinton promoted her health-care plan—this despite being ostensibly nonpartisan. Such was the foundation's financial influence on the health care debate that by 1995 it alone accounted for almost 45 percent of all giving in the area of health policy in America.”

Keep in mind that state and local health departments are a creation of the Kansas Legislature. It is the responsibility of the State to supervise and manage these entities, not the Federal government or the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Do we really need more Federal involvement in our state and local health departments? Is there really a quality problem? If so, why hasn't someone asked the Kansas Legislature to address the issue? The answer is because there is no quality problem. The only “problem” is that big-government progressives want control over state and local health departments and our daily lives.

Solution: Please, resist the temptation to give the federal government and their progressive partners control over our state and local health departments. Defend our state sovereignty and help us avoid the costly unfunded mandates that will undoubtedly come as a result of this accreditation process. I urge you to SUPPORT SB 160.