

Date: March 7, 2016

To: House Committee on Health and Human Services

From: Kevin J. Robertson, CAE
Executive Director

RE: Support of SB 402 – Charity Care

Chairman Hawkins and members of the committee I am Kevin Robertson, executive director of the Kansas Dental Association (KDA) representing the state's 1,532 licensed dentists. Thanks for the opportunity to discuss with you the Kansas Dental Associations' thoughts on SB 402.

The Kansas Dental Association (KDA) believes that incentives for healthcare providers to provide care to underserved populations can promote increased care and, as such, supports SB 402 as amended by the Senate. This bill contains the exact same language concerning dentist CE as HB 2615, which passed this committee and the House before turnaround.

The Kansas Charitable Healthcare Provider Act limits the liability of healthcare providers who volunteer for specific charitable events. Should the Committee agree to add dentists to SB 402, charitable dental work performed by a dentist conducted in places like a local health department, community health center, federally qualified health center and the Kansas Mission of Mercy would be included. In 2012, the KDA introduced successful legislation to expand the Charitable Healthcare Provider Act to allow dentists that do organized charitable dental events in their office to receive the liability protections contained in the Act to encourage more innovative charity events. SB 402 does not include donated services that are not part of an organized event or simply delivered in the dental office.

The Pew Charitable Trust estimates that dentists provide an average of \$33,000 in free care each year. When multiplied by the number of dentists practicing in Kansas (1,532) that comes to over \$50 million gratis care provided by Kansas dentists! As we discussed two weeks ago, the KDA, through its affiliated foundation, the Kansas Dental Charitable Foundation, has provided \$15 million in dental care to 27,000 Kansans across the state through its annual Kansas Mission of Mercy (KMOM) free dental clinic. In addition, the KDA is celebrating the 20th anniversary of its partnership with the with the Dental Lifeline Network which began in 1996 to develop a Donated Dental Services (DDS) program to help Kansas residents with disabilities or who are elderly or medically fragile and have no other access to dental care. The Kansas DDS program, through its volunteer dentists and labs have, donated over \$10 million of comprehensive treatment for 3,265 vulnerable people since its inception.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions at the appropriate time.