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University of Kansas School of Medicine Class of 2020

**Written Testimony to the House Committee on Health and Human Services
Regarding Senate Bill 32: Medical student loan agreements for psychiatry.**

Date: March 8th, 2017

Representative Hawkins, Representative Concannon, and distinguished members of the House Health and Human Services committee, thank you for allowing me to offer a statement of testimony today. I am but a first-year medical student, what some would call non-traditional, who has almost completed his second semester in medical school. I have a long road ahead, but because of my life's experiences I have committed myself to service in primary care. My passion to assist patients with a full spectrum of care also has led me to seek a second residency in psychiatric medicine as well. I will note that my interest in this bill is for students other than myself, and my decision to practice primary care as well as mental health care will stand regardless of the outcome of this discussion. I am here to advocate for the citizens of Kansas.

I am a student. I am also an assistant director of the JayDoc Free Health Clinic, co-President of the school's Psychology and Psychiatry Interest Group alongside my friend and colleague, Alex Germann, and a dedicated father and husband. It is no secret that there is a drastic need for psychiatrists in many parts of Kansas. In fact, all but five counties in Kansas are federally-designated shortage areas. In some areas, wait times for appointments can be upwards of 90 days due to the lack of psychiatrists in the region. Only half of adults with mental illness in Kansas get treatment, and even then only half of those who get treatment are receiving adequate care.

I firmly believe that with incentive, many other students who want to practice Psychiatry will want to practice in and for Kansas in these areas that so desperately need it. I believe we have the rare opportunity today to innovate and build a strong foundation to help future patients address all of their needs – mental and physical.

I come here today hopeful and concerned for the well-being of those patients, and humbly ask that you pass Senate Bill 32.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Ortiz

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Ortiz', with a large circular flourish at the end.