



17 January 2018

## **Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee**

### **Testimony in Support of House Bill 2106**

Chairwoman Schmidt and Members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony. I am Stuart Little, President of the Behavioral Health Association of Kansas (BHAK) the state's trade association dedicated solely to substance use disorders treatment and prevention providers seeking integrated behavioral health care. BHAK believes that true integrated behavioral health means access and funding for mental illness and substance use disorder treatment without regard to where a consumer seeks services. Our stakeholders large and small and geographically diverse adhere to the core beliefs of expanding capacity and access, and providing consumer choice in the publicly funded behavioral health system.

I am here to express full support of House Bill 2106 to continue it's progress to completion. I am joined in person and in written testimony by several treatment providers who support passage of HB 2106.

BHAK believes House Bill 2106 is a positive advancement for the field of substance use disorder treatment in Kansas. House Bill 2106 will allow nationally accredited providers through organizations such as the Commission of Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), Council on Accreditation, or the Joint Commission to meet state regulatory requirements through their national accreditation. Several substance use providers who will explain in greater detail how this bill will benefit consumers and their organizations.

Beyond organizational benefits and convenience, we believe this bill reflects the overall direction of behavioral health care. Many substance use disorder organizations are currently providing or are looking to provide more comprehensive services to individuals receiving care in their organizations including co-occurring mental health treatment and psychiatric services. Integrated care is the future in the field. National accreditation creates a platform for more organizations to develop services to meet the needs of individuals in a more integrated cost-effective framework with fewer duplicative regulatory processes.

The Legislature and the Governor approved Senate Bill 449 during the 2016 legislative session creating this authority for community mental health centers. Senate Bill 449 included very specific language as requested by the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services

(KDADS) to be included in the law. In House Bill 2106, Section 1 (b) (A and B) you will find the same requirements as requested by KDADS to support the bill for community mental health centers in 2016. We concur with their position and have included in House Bill 2106 the exact same language. The House Health Committee in 2017 amended lines 18-19 as a technical corrections and the bill passed the House 125-0.

We urge your support for House Bill 2106 and passage out of committee. I am happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.

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