



Senate 252 Support

Written Testimony submitted to the
Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

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Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce

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Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce supports Senate Bill 252, which creates a unique Kansas response to the Medicaid coverage gap. The Act works within the current KanCare program to provide affordable health care coverage for the over 150,000 low-income Kansans, including eligible residents of Topeka and Shawnee County, at no additional cost to Kansas taxpayers.

Healthcare is among Shawnee County's most important industry sectors. Institutions like Stormont-Vail Health, The University of Kansas Health System St. Francis Campus, Colmery O'Neil VA Hospital, Kansas Rehabilitation Hospital and Tallgrass Surgical Center are some of our largest employers and most respected corporate citizens. The providers that deliver health care services to the citizens of Northeast Kansas, including large hospitals and smaller specialized practices account for over 15,000 jobs in Topeka and generate a large share of our economic activity.

Kansas' decision thus far not to take advantage of the federal dollars available to states that develop answers to the question of closing the Medicaid coverage gap, has left nearly \$4 billion Kansas tax dollars in Washington. As a result, Kansas hospitals and health care providers have provided hundreds of millions of dollars in services with no reimbursement, putting them at risk financially. This has made it difficult for providers to recruit doctors and nurses and results in higher premiums and costs for those who have insurance.

The Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce supports common sense compromise on the issue of closing the Medicaid coverage gap. This bill is the right solution for our state because it requires participants to be accountable by requiring them to participate in a work referral and job training program. It will be budget-neutral, as well. The cost of



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insuring more Kansans will be offset by new federal funding, reductions in health care spending, modest premiums which ensure a level of individual responsibility for their healthcare decisions and revenue gains that result from insuring more people.

For all these reasons, we urge you to support Senate Bill 252.

Contact:

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