

November 12, 2019

Kansas Action for Children
Testimony in support of KanCare expansion
Special Committee on Medicaid Expansion

Chair Brenda Landwehr and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of expanding KanCare. Kansas Action for Children's vision is to make Kansas the best state to raise -- and be -- a child, and our organization shapes health, education, and economic policies that improve the lives of Kansas children and families. **We support expanding KanCare coverage because it will improve the health and well-being of Kansas children and families.**

Expanding KanCare will reduce infant mortality. Currently, many low-income women are eligible for KanCare coverage only during pregnancy. Inconsistent coverage for women contributes to the state's infant mortality rate of 6 deaths per 1,000 live births. Despite the state's overall decrease in infant mortality in recent years, Black babies are twice as likely to die before their first birthdays when compared to their white peers. Offering health care coverage before and between pregnancies is a key strategy to reduce infant mortality for all Kansas infants.

Expanding KanCare to cover more Kansas adults will reduce the number of uninsured children. Kansas has made great progress in providing health care coverage for children – 95 percent are covered. But there is more work to do. Nearly 40,000 Kansas children lack health insurance coverage. Most of these children are eligible for KanCare, and we know that children are more likely to be insured when their parents are also insured. By expanding coverage for adults, we can help more children get the medical care they need to stay healthy, active, and ready to succeed in school and in life.

Covering adults will improve the health and well-being of Kansas children. Children's health reflects the health and well-being of their parents. When parents have health care coverage, children are more likely to receive regular checkups and essential preventative care, such as

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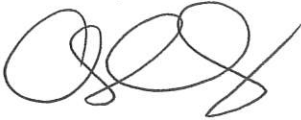
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Shaping policy that puts children first

immunizations. Health insurance also protects families from financial crisis following unexpected medical emergencies. Expanding KanCare to cover more Kansas parents is an effective two-generation strategy that will improve the health and well-being of Kansas children.

For these reasons, Kansas Action for Children supports expanding KanCare. This coverage is a good investment for Kansas kids and can work even better with expanded coverage for adults. We respectfully request the Committee support KanCare expansion, which will strengthen our state's children and families. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



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