

Logan Manor Community Health Services

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January 27, 2022

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Teresa McComb, and I am the administrator of a nursing home in rural northwest Kansas. The past couple of years have been extremely difficult especially where staffing is concerned. Staff members are exhausted, and many have left the nursing field all together. Recently with the mandate of vaccination we are looking at loosing additional staff members. We have also lost staff members to staffing agencies. We are doing our best to train our own CNA staff and to recruit people who would make wonderful caregivers. We teach the CNA classes in our facility as often as possible but we often loose those we train to hospitals or travel agencies where they can get higher pay. Staffing has always been a concern, but the past two years have substantially increased the crisis, without a change in things many small nursing homes will cease to exist. This would make residents have to move away from the small town they have grown up in and lived in forever.

Staffing agencies in our area have recruited and taken many of our staff members by offering them higher paying jobs. We have raised our starting wages and put as much money towards increasing wages as we can, but we just cannot compete with double or more the pay that the CNAs get paid by agencies. Our facility has been in a position at times when we have reached out to staffing agencies because we need a charge nurse to fill in shifts. Each time we have reached out to staffing agencies they have been unable to help us with staff. They can not provide a nurse to work at the nursing home because they are already working at other facilities including the hospitals. The last time I talked with our local hospital they had very few nurses who were actual hospital employees with a large number of the staff working being staffing agency nurses. The hospital was offering an RN \$150 an hour to work in their facility. There is no way that we would be able to pay a nurse that kind of money. The starting wages at most facilities in our area for an RN is between \$30 and \$35.

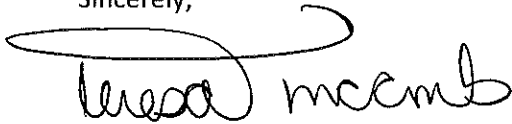
Staffing agency nurses are often times not the best nurses and we struggle with getting one who is good with the residents and staff members. Often I get the feeling that they are only here to get a paycheck and the resident care really suffers. I am also concerned with using staffing agencies going forward because they have been telling their employees that they do not have to get vaccinated to continue their employment. We need to ensure that if we do use a staffing agency employee that we are getting someone who is vaccinated, and we also need to ensure that they have all the paperwork on hand that we are required to have for our employees. Staffing agencies need to be able to prove that they have completed background checks, have work comp on their employees, register with KDADs, and document all licensing, training, and continuing education that we require of our own employees. We are here to care for the residents who have entrusted us to look after them in the last years of their

lives. With the astronomical amounts we must pay the staffing agencies I do not believe that it's too big of an ask to make them hold their employees to the same standards that we are held to. Staffing agency nurses and CNAs need to be employees of the staffing agency and not contractors.

Another issue we have had in the past is if you have a nurse or a CNA working for you through a staffing agency and it's a really good fit for you and the employee and you want to offer them a full-time job through your facility you have to pay the agency to break the contract. These amounts are often in the thousands of dollars amounts and really are hard to be able to pay financially, especially with how high turn over is in nursing homes because of burnout.

I do not think that HB 2524 will fix our staffing issues, but I fully support it and I do think that it will help facilities to keep their staffing levels up and to be better off financially. My staff is amazing and there are a core group of people who have been working at Logan Manor for 10-30+ years most of us are here for the residents and we love what we do. We ask that you consider supporting this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Teresa McComb". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish over the first part of the name.

Teresa McComb

Administrator