



KANSAS
ASSOCIATION OF
COUNTIES

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Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee
March 8, 2022
SB 489

Kansas Association of Counties
Opponent Testimony

Chairman Hilderbrand and members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing the Kansas Association of Counties to offer opposition testimony on SB 489, concerning infectious/contagious diseases and the powers of the secretary of health and environment, local boards of health and local health officers.

The Kansas Association of Counties has long stood on the principle that government closest to the people will best understand and serve the community's needs. This belief shapes what the KAC does. SB 489 removes the ability for a county or joint board of health or the local health officer from prohibiting public gatherings when necessary for the control of an infectious/contagious diseases in the future.

While COVID-19 is on our minds now, the changes made by SB 489 will be with us well into the future. We do not know what the next health crisis will be, how it will be transmitted, and who it may impact. No one knows at this moment what that crisis will be, or how we will go about protecting individuals against it. Permanently removing tools from the toolbox could result in tragic results.

KAC would urge caution when considering these types of long term policies, and would therefore ask that the committee not advance SB 489. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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