



Pratt County Health Department



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Testimony of Pratt County Health Department to the
Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

Proponent for SB 252 • January 16, 2020

Chairman Suellentrop and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to supply written testimony in support of Senate Bill 252 regarding expanding medical assistance eligibility. As a local health department, we are not a major recipient of Medicaid dollars, but we often work with those populations that rely upon the Medicaid system and will benefit from this expansion bill.

SB 252 will make tremendous strides in providing insurance coverage to Kansans currently without. Local health departments like mine are often seen as a vital safety net to a community. However, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation¹ the safety net system does not close the access gap for the uninsured population. In other states, expansion has provided significant growth in health centers and their service capacity. Such growth in non-expansion states since the Affordable Care Act passes has happened but in a more limited fashion.

Safety net providers, like the local health department, have limited resources and service capacity. Insurance permits citizens to access care in a compensated manner that reduces stress on the safety net system. It is for these reasons that the Pratt County Health Department supports SB 252 and asks that you recommend it favorably.

Respectfully,

Darcie Van Der Vyver, Administrator/RN

Pratt County Health Department

¹ Source: The Uninsured and the ACA: A Primer – Key Facts about Health Insurance and the Uninsured amidst Changes to the Affordable Care Act (1/25/2019): <https://www.kff.org/report-section/the-uninsured-and-the-aca-a-primer-key-facts-about-health-insurance-and-the-uninsured-amidst-changes-to-the-affordable-care-act-how-does-lack-of-insurance-affect-access-to-care/>