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HealthCoreClinic.org

**Testimony to Support SB252
January 23, 2020
Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee**

Chairman Senator Sullentrop and members of the Committee,

Please accept this testimony in support of Senate Bill 252, also known as the “expanding medical assistance eligibility and implementing a health insurance plan reinsurance program.” I am passionate about this piece of legislation because it will positively impact the lives of many people especially young children that are “aging off” the current Medicaid system, young families that are struggling to maintain a healthy family, and our most vulnerable citizens across Kansas.

A few years ago, I lost my 21 year old nephew that was diagnosed at age 6 with juvenile diabetes. When he turned 20, he no longer qualified for Medicaid. One year later, Allen died while attending Cowley County Community College alone in his apartment from complications associated with diabetes. Another young family member turned 21 and was diagnosed with HIV while at Dodge City Community College. Uninsured and desperately trying to navigate the complicated medical system, he has given up hope and is struggling with drug addiction and frequent contacts with the criminal justice system. Every year for the next 5 years, I will have a niece or nephew that will “age off” of Medicaid and will depend on the new health insurance system to maintain medical coverage. Most are planning on attending college and are working entry-level jobs. Their respective parents work as well but in jobs that will not support purchasing family health insurance therefore they will not be able to enjoy the privilege of staying on their parents’ insurance until they are 26 years of age.

My family is not alone! There are many families like mine that understand that their children will lose their health insurance and will not be able to qualify for insurance on the federal marketplace without the State of Kansas expanding access to health insurance coverage.

As the CEO of a community health center, HealthCore Clinic served over 3,000 uninsured patients in 2019 that would qualify for health insurance if SB252 is supported. Most of these individuals are employed, head of household of families and yet they are “too poor” to purchase insurance on the marketplace and yet “too rich” or “ineligible” for Medicaid under current guidelines. A plainspoken Medicaid Expansion policy would provide access to healthcare insurance (medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, etc.) for newly eligible individuals while empowering personal responsibility. Clinics across the State would realize additional revenue that will allow them to hire new staff and reinvest in local community health initiatives. Furthermore, this legislation supports decreasing health disparities and improving the lives of every Kansan!

HealthCore Clinic, Inc. strongly supports SB252! Please feel free to contact me if you should have any additional questions or concerns. Thank you for your attention to this matter!

Sincerely,

Teresa Lovelady, MBA, MSW
President & CEO