

**Testimony on House Bill 2259 regarding
Expedited Partner Therapy
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Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Dr. Donna Sweet, and I am an Internal Medicine physician in Kansas.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide supporting testimony relative to House Bill 2259 and I and the Kansas Medical Society strongly support this bill for the use of expedited partner therapy (EPT) in the treatment of sexually transmitted infections.

The most common reportable infection each year in Kansas is the sexually transmitted infection Chlamydia. During calendar year 2020, 6,046 cases of chlamydia were diagnosed in Kansas, with the majority of cases occurring in people of reproductive age. Left untreated, chlamydia can result in infertility, ectopic pregnancy, and in some cases, even death. Pregnant women infected with a sexually transmitted infection may experience preterm birth and may pass the infection on to their infant during birth. Infants infected with STIs can suffer both a type of pneumonia and infection of the eyes which can lead to blindness if left untreated.

One of the most significant risk factors for complications of infected patients is repeat infection, and most repeat infections are due to re-exposure by an untreated partner. The use of EPT removes barriers to ensuring the treatment of potentially infected partners, thus reducing the risk of reinfection. EPT allows the partners of infected individuals to more easily obtain treatment. Data shows us that the more barriers that can be removed to seeking care, the more likely it is that patients will obtain the necessary care. EPT is supported at the national level by numerous organizations, most notably the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as the National Coalition of STD Directors.

In addition, EPT is currently legal in 45 states, including Missouri, Colorado, and Nebraska. The CDC recommended treatment for Chlamydia is an incredibly safe antibiotic with very few side effects and contraindications. The use of EPT in 45 states over the past decade with no major adverse events occurring further demonstrates the safety and efficacy of the treatment. EPT is common sense public health, and put simply, it can prevent STD-related infertility and other long-term consequences.

According to the CDC “Unless prohibited by law or other regulations, medical providers should routinely offer EPT to heterosexual patients with chlamydia or gonorrhea infection when the provider cannot confidently ensure that all of a patient’s sex partners from the prior 60 days will be treated.” As a practicing physician in Kansas for my entire career, I am proud to be able to support HB 2259. It will have a positive impact on the lives of many Kansans and helps support positive health outcomes by slowing the growth of sexually transmitted infections in the state.