



Testimony of the Kansas Association of Counties to the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Testimony in support of SB 118 • February 20, 2019

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing the Kansas Association of Counties the opportunity to testify in support of SB 118. County hospitals are a vital part of rural health care. The Association of Counties and its members are supportive of the role that county hospitals play in our communities. While it is the hope of the Kansas Association of Counties and our member counties that no county hospital would close, given recent news of yet another rural hospital closure, we cannot ignore this issue. It should be noted that no county hospital in Kansas has closed at this time.

K.S.A. 19-4625 addresses county hospital closures. There is, however, a gap in the statute. The statute does not contemplate what would happen if a hospital were to close with outstanding debt. SB 118 seeks to address that gap by clarifying that the county would not be responsible for any outstanding debt.

In working with the Kansas Hospital Association, the Kansas Association of Counties would like to offer an amendment to this language to further clarify the intent. The basis of this amendment is to make it clear that this bill will not interfere with the ability of counties and county hospitals to contract. The language of the amendment would read as follows:

Unless otherwise stipulated in contract between the county and the county hospital or hospital board, the county shall not be responsible for any debts or obligations incurred by the hospital or hospital board.

This clarifying language was recommended by the Kansas Hospital Association and is agreeable to the Kansas Association of Counties.

We ask that the committee support SB 118 with the above amendment. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Jay Hall

Kansas Association of Counties

