



Community Health Center of Southeast Kansas

3015 N. MICHIGAN, P.O. BOX 1832, PITTSBURG, KS 66762

Neutral Testimony of HB 2340 with Amended Changes
Committee on Public Health and Welfare
March 20th, 2023

Chair Gossage and members of the Committee, my name is Eric Thomason. I serve as Vice President of Behavioral Health and Addiction Treatment services for Community Health Center of Southeast Kansas (CHC/SEK). CHC/SEK is a 501(c)(3) public charity, federally qualified health center (FQHC), and Kansas not-for-profit corporation. We are proud to serve 10 counties throughout Southeast Kansas. We employ over 900 employees. CHC/SEK served 72,315 unique patients in 2022 accounting for 273,156 visits, including 40,837 behavioral health visits. We are an organization defined by the communities that we serve. Greater than 50% of our board of directors are our patients and they all reside in the communities we provide service. We provide management services and staff our local homeless shelter, we serve as the food pantry in our communities, we provide outreach services out our local universities, and provide behavioral health and medical care to jails and schools across our service area.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide neutral testimony to House Bill 2340 with amended changes. This moves to create a new licensure type for licensed professional counselors, social workers, marriage family therapists and licensed psychologists. As written, HB 2340 recognizes only one provider type, the Community Mental Health Centers as the only authorized service provider. Despite being a temporary licensure, the "Community Based Provider" is permitted to introduce and present themselves as a fully licensed professional counselor, marriage family therapist, psychologist, and/or social worker. Lastly, this bill moves to extend temporary license from 12 to 24 months. As written this bill would permit an individual to identify themselves as a licensed psychologist for two years, despite not completing the licensure requirements and obtaining board certification.

CHC/SEK is a community based provider, much like many of the other organizations who serve as FQHCs throughout Kansas.

I respectfully recommend the following changes:

1. Amend service provider organizations to include Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers.
 - a. Page 8, Line 35: Add "or a federally qualified health center as defined in KSA 65-7402."
 - b. Page 19, Line 2: Add "or a federally qualified health center as defined in KSA 65-7402."
 - c. Page 29, Line 3: Add "or a federally qualified health center as defined in KSA 65-7402."
 - d. Page 50, Line 24: Add "or a federally qualified health center as defined in KSA 65-7402."
2. Require attestation and self-identification of temporary licensure for all "Community Based" and temporary licensed behavioral health staff.
3. Amend the temporary licensure duration and "Community Based" licensure duration to the original 12 months.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Eric Thomason', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

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