



Kansas Association of Addiction Professionals

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**700 SW Jackson, Suite 1101
Topeka, KS 66603
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January 24, 2012

Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee
Senate Bill 290: Addiction Counselor Licensure Act

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Chairwoman Schmidt and members of the committee:

I thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today related to SB 290, a revision of the Addiction Counselor Licensure Act. My name is Sarah Hansen, Executive Director of the Kansas Association of Addiction Professionals. Our association is comprised of nearly 500 addiction treatment and prevention professionals and treatment program providers from across the state of Kansas. I appear today to issue our support of the proposed bill.

The enrolled draft of SB 290 is a result of the work of the compromise committee the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board convened and facilitated. This group of concerned parties met to negotiate statutory language changes and begin the discussion of regulation revisions. Our association was represented on this committee and participated in negotiating an agreement.

As indicated in the testimony of Mr. Tom Hawk, there are three proposed changes to the original Addiction Counselor statutes that were passed by the legislature in the 2010 and 2011 legislative sessions (HB 2577 and HB 2182). These changes include:

- I. To allow those who are currently licensed in Kansas as a psychologist, specialist clinical social worker, clinical professional counselor, clinical psychotherapist, or a clinical marriage and family therapist, has provided an attestation from a professional licensed to diagnose and treat substance use disorders in independent practice stating that the applicant is competent to diagnose and treat substance use disorders, has passed an examination approved by the board, and has satisfied the board that the applicant is a person who merits the public trust, to apply for and be granted licensure as a Licensed Clinical Addiction Counselor (LCAC).
- II. To allow those who are currently licensed in Kansas as a baccalaureate social worker, has completed a minimum number of semester hours of coursework on substance use disorders, has passed an examination approved by the board, and has satisfied the board that the applicant is a person who merits the public trust, to apply for and be granted licensure as a Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC)
- III. The removal of the word psychologist in old section D: In HB2182 (related to LAC). Psychologists currently have the professional rights to diagnose and treat at the clinical level.

Our association is pleased with the work of the committee and respects the decision of the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board to move forward with these three proposed changes. We would like to note that all participating parties agreed to these elements and supported the notion of no further changes. Our association honors that commitment and as such, would not be supportive of additional changes or modifications outside of this agreement.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 290. I am happy to stand for questions.