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House Committee Children and Senior's

February 26, 2013

HB 2348

Madam Chairwoman and Committee Members

Good Morning, I am Cindy Luxem CEO President of the Kansas Health Care Association and Kansas Center for Assisted Living. Our membership is made up of nursing homes, assisted living, home plus, community care retirement communities, nursing facilities for mental health and other community based providers.

Today, I am here before you as an opponent of HB 2348. It is difficult to come out in opposition to increased staffing levels. But because of the current fiscal state of Kansas and the uncertainty of KanCare and the Affordable Care Act, providers are being asked to do a lot with very limited resources.

The actual average for all long-term care facilities in Kansas is 3.95 hours per resident day. This is a far different picture than is being painted today with this legislation. We know staffing remains an important factor in quality care. We are in favor of families and older Kansans being able to make informed choices about what options are available and how to choose a quality provider.

When we begin dictating the staffing it negates person centered care completely and forces homes toward regulatory compliance rather than focusing on the needs of elders; the other fact is more care does not equate better care; there are no studies that prove that; better care comes from education; better leadership/management and increased passion for the mission, not more numbers.

If this is something that the state (KDADS) would like to pursue we would ask a group be tasked with coming up with a plan. Not an attempt to redo a system in a short amount of time that is working. This legislation has been written and rewritten because it is trying to conform what is working in regulation and make into fit into a new legislation and has not been properly vetted.

The fiscal note on this legislation alone should put this on the shelf at this time. Kansas is not ready to spend the dollars necessary to do everything included in HB 2348.

We would be happy to commit to the study of this issue and report back in the 2014 legislature.

Thank you for your time today.

Cindy Luxem