



## Kansas Respiratory Care Society

*An Affiliate of the American Association for Respiratory Care*

*Mission: To educate, advocate, and promote the profession and practice of Respiratory Care*

Date: February 12, 2013

To: Committee on Health and Human Services

From: Suzanne Bollig  
President, KRCS

Re: HB2184

Dear Chairman Crum and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Kansas Respiratory Care Society, more than 1,900 Kansas respiratory therapists, and the patients we serve, I would like to register my support for HB2184 which would direct the secretary of health and environment to establish a state plan for the comprehensive treatment of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

COPD is a chronic disease of the airways characterized by impairment of airflow due to chronic obstructive bronchitis or emphysema. In 2010, COPD surpassed stroke to become the third leading cause of death in the United States after heart disease and cancer. It is currently estimated that as many as 30 million people in the United States (including both diagnosed and undiagnosed) may have COPD. Despite the fact that COPD is preventable and the symptoms are treatable, it is the only major chronic disease whose mortality rate is still rising.

The burden imposed by COPD on the health care system in the United States is enormous. Because the disease is chronic and progressive, patients frequently require physician office visits, diagnostic procedures, medications, and emergency and hospital services. The annual cost of COPD in the US has been estimated at \$49.9 billion by the American Lung Association, including \$29.5 billion in direct medical costs, \$8 billion in indirect costs, and \$12.4 billion in indirect mortality costs.

COPD represents an important public health challenge that is both preventable and treatable. Globally, the COPD burden is projected to increase in coming decades because of continued exposure to COPD risk factors and aging of the population. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) recognizes that efforts to improve public recognition of COPD as a public health problem and to provide a framework for the prevention and treatment of COPD are of great importance to the citizens of the United States.

If enacted, HB2184 would provide a comprehensive plan to address all the above issues and provide the citizens of Kansas with improved healthcare at a lower cost. The KRCS strongly supports HB2184 and encourages the Committee to take favorable action leading to improved quality of life for Kansans.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Bollig, BHS, RRT-SDS, RPSGT, R.EEGT.  
President  
Kansas Respiratory Care Society