



Mirror, Inc.

Safe, Healthy People in Strong Communities

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- ❑ Mirror of Independence
(620) 331-4854
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- ❑ Mirror of Pittsburg
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- ❑ Mirror of Wellington
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- ❑ Mirror of Wichita (Pattie)
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Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 217

March 7, 2013

Chairwoman Pilcher-Cook and Members of the Committee:

Good morning. I am Cynthia Breitenbach, Vice-President of Treatment Services at Mirror Inc. I have practiced as an addictions counselor and administrator for the past thirty-five years and currently am a Licensed Clinical Addictions Counselor.

Mirror, Inc. currently employs 35-40 licensed addictions counselors at 16 locations across the state of Kansas. These clinicians all fall under my supervision. Many of our counselors are also social workers who we require to seek additional licensure and training before expanding their scope of practice to include substance abuse treatment.

- Our experience is not that Kansas needs to undo our current licensure standard as proposed in SB217 in order to meet a perceived ‘unmet’ need for access to services.
- Substance abuse disorder treatment (SUD) is a highly specialized field. We and our staff have invested a great deal of time and money in order to acquire the extensive training and work experience necessary to practice. Changing these licensure regulations barely two years after their establishment is wasteful, unwise and eliminates the competitive advantage of our business investment.
- Mirror, Inc. also specializes in providing SUD treatment in the criminal justice field. Providing services to this population is a matter of public safety and requires an even greater level of specialization, not less as SB217 proposes.

- As demonstrated under the licensure application for Addictions Counselors, we continue to believe that the current licensing process not that proposed under SB217 assures the greatest level of consumer protection.
- The current addiction counselor licensure does not preclude the social worker from practicing in the addiction field. They just need to acquire specialized training in substance use disorders and to pass a test. This specialization requirement is not unlike that of other healthcare-related professions.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today and would appreciate your support in opposing SB217. I would be glad to stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Respectfully,

Cynthia Breitenbach
Vice President of Treatment Services
Mirror Inc.