

Testimony of Pottawatomie County Health Department to the
House Committee on Education
Opponent for HB 2601 • February, 11, 2020

Chairman Huebert and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to supply written testimony in opposition to House Bill 2601 which would shift childcare and school immunization requirements from administrative regulation by the Secretary of KDHE to being listed in statute. As a local health department we are greatly concerned with protecting the health of the public and view HB 2601 as bad public policy.

The Kansas Legislature lacks the expertise in disease prevention and immunization decision-making to be the appropriate body to make such vaccine determinations. KDHE employs public health experts who are trained in such science and are the ideal decision-makers to protect the public's health from vaccine-preventable diseases. The administrative regulation process that currently exists is deliberative and transparent, so there is no real gain to be had from a public knowledge perspective by shifting over to the Kansas Legislature. The administrative process provides flexibility, such as the need to respond to changing ACIP (Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices) recommendations.

Given the dangers posed by vaccine-preventable diseases and the high level of expertise needed to properly make immunization schedule recommendations, we believe the existing system is ideally posed to determine which vaccines should be mandated by schools and childcare facilities. It is for these reasons that the Pottawatomie County Health Department opposes HB 2601.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Kenworthy". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Lisa Kenworthy, RN Director/Health Officer