



# JOHNSON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

## **Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare Testimony on SB160 Local health department; prohibition of accreditation requirements**

February 18, 2013  
By Lougene Marsh, Director

Madame Chair and Members of the Committee:

This testimony is offered in opposition to SB 160. Johnson County Department of Health and Environment has been planning for Public Health Accreditation for several years and pursuit of accreditation is included in the department's strategic plan completed in 2010. The following actions have been taken:

- Organizational assessment of readiness to meet accreditation requirements
- Letter of Intent submitted in August, 2012
- Application for accreditation submitted in October, 2012
- Payment of accreditation fee
- Training of accreditation coordinator

The Johnson County Board of Commissioners serving as the Board of Health for Johnson County endorsed the department's pursuit of accreditation and believes as does the department that protection of the health and environment of Johnson County is best served by having a department that can demonstrate that it meets the requirements of accreditation. Expected outcomes of accreditation include:

- Consistent use of evidence-based practices
- Development of a culture of quality and performance improvement based
- Public health system focused of achieving improvements in population health

Accreditation enhances organizational credibility and assures that a department is well positioned to serve its community.

Ultimately, this bill interferes with local decision making and the right of the Board of Health to determine whether accreditation is the right course for its local health department to pursue.