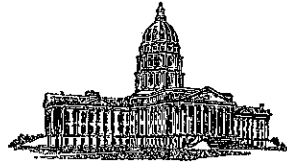


State of Kansas
House of Representatives

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TOPEKA

BRENDA K. LANDWEHR
Representative, 115th District

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

CHAIR: SOCIAL SERVICES BUDGET
MEMBER: APPROPRIATIONS
K-12 BUDGET

Testimony in Support of HB2517

February 15, 2018

Thank you, Chairman Barker, for providing me the opportunity to appear before this committee in support of HB2517.

This bill is the language from the lottery vending machine bill which was vetoed by Governor Brownback last year. I was disappointed when it was vetoed because it contained some important sections that allowed debt offset on winnings at the state-owned casinos. Some of the expected new funding will provide money for Community Crisis Stabilization Centers and funding for the clubhouse model program for individuals dealing with mental health issues.

The debt offset program will allow winnings of gamblers to be attached to pay for back child support they owe. This ability already exists for the lottery. The language in this bill was developed with support from the agencies and the casino operators.

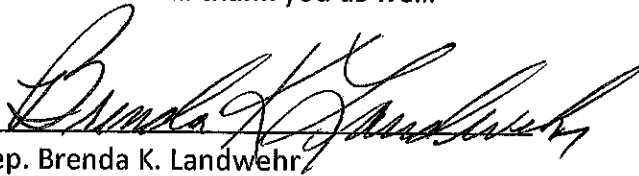
The ability to use these funds for mental health programs expires in five years to allow the legislature another opportunity to see if adjustments need to be made. It would then need to be renewed for another five years or, if the legislature felt a five-year review was not needed, it could be continued automatically.

As you know there is a lot of discussion on the needs for Kansans' in the area of mental health. Funds have been reduced for several years to our communities. It is important to try and serve people in the community, if at all possible, because that is where their support network of family and friends is.

Some of our Community Mental Health Centers are also dealing with individuals with substance abuse as well. We are seeing an increase in opioid use and when abusers of the prescription medication cannot get their hands on those they will look for heroin and meth. Substance abuse has a tie to mental illness. We need to do everything possible to help people dealing with these issues.

I encourage the committee to pass this bill out favorably without changes because it is the same language passed overwhelmingly by both chambers during the 2017 legislative session. As a reminder, the final action by the House on March 23, 2017, was 100 – 25 in favor. On March 30, 2017, the Senate voted favorably on final action with a vote of 30 – 10. Both houses approved the Conference Committee Report on June 6 last year, the House on a count of 98-19, and the Senate 34-4. With this level of support, it is believed the bill stands a good chance of being signed by our current governor.

I thank you for your consideration and I know the people of Kansas struggling with mental health issues will thank you as well.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brenda K. Landwehr", written over a horizontal line.

Rep. Brenda K. Landwehr

District 105