



**KANSAS**  
ASSOCIATION OF  
**COUNTIES**

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TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
ON HB 2139

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 2139, which creates a new level of dental practitioner, the dental therapist.

Kansas county commissioners serve as the county public health board. In that capacity, they are informed as to the health needs in their communities. The KAC Legislative Policy Committee, composed of county commissioners representing all regions of Kansas, plus other county officials, visited with the Kansas Dental Project when they began developing this legislation. After review and analysis, our Legislative Policy Committee determined that our association would support this legislation because it provides dental care to areas of Kansas that greatly need dental care and are short on dentists. We also believe the legislation will bring jobs to rural Kansas. This initiative continues to remain on our annual policy statement, which is adopted by all member counties at our annual meeting.

Dental therapists are intended to provide routine and preventative care. They would be required to pass a clinical exam after obtaining advanced education and training, and must be supervised by a dentist. A similar arrangement has been successful between physicians and nurse practitioners. Kansas counties believe this position will bring a much needed component of public health to our communities – dental and oral health.

This legislation also encourages the growth of small businesses in Kansas. HB 2139 will allow small dental businesses to expand and grow, while extending much needed services to Kansas communities.

KAC appreciates the opportunity to support HB 2139, and calls on the committee to do the same.

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