



23 January 2018

Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 195

Chairwoman Schmidt and Members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony. I am Stuart Little, President of the Behavioral Health Association of Kansas (BHAK) the state's trade association dedicated solely to substance use disorders treatment and prevention providers seeking integrated behavioral health care. BHAK believes that true integrated behavioral health means access and funding for mental illness and substance use disorder treatment without regard to where a consumer seeks services. Our stakeholders large and small and geographically diverse adhere to the core beliefs of expanding capacity and access, and providing consumer choice in the publicly funded behavioral health system.

I am here to express full support for Senate Bill 195.

- We believe House Bill 2106 is a positive advancement for those in need of substance use disorder treatment in Kansas. We support SB 195, for the same reasons we support Medicaid expansion, to get people services.
- Many of these people, particularly in and out of the criminal justice system, have SUD issues and they need quick and seamless SUD treatment.
- There are, however, problems in the current treatment system. These individuals need access to services that are already overburdened, underfunded, and have limited capacity to serve additional people.
- MCOs, patients and families, and SUD providers know the system lacks adequate capacity and resources.
- Suspension rather than termination in SB 195, should be accompanied in the next round of Medicaid managed care with changes in behavioral health funding structure and systems to use qualified providers in the SUD field to serve these people including their mental health needs.
- Instead of the funding monopoly that restricts Medicaid mental health services to community mental health centers, suspension and expansion needs to incorporate the SUD system safety net. Allowing qualified providers to treat and be paid will result in

increased access, capacity, and positive outcomes. All provider systems are the safety net for Kansas and they need to be used.

We urge your support for Senate Bill 195 and passage out of committee. I am happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.

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