



To: Chairman Ron Olson, and Members
Senate Utilities Committee
From: Rachel Monger, Vice President of Government Affairs
Date: March 20, 2018

Testimony in Support of HB2701 - Establishing the statewide broadband expansion task force

Thank you, Chairman Olson and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to comment on House Bill 2701.

LeadingAge Kansas is the statewide association for faith-based and other nonprofit long-term care and post-acute care (LTPAC) providers. Together our 155 members serve over 25,000 Kansas older adults each day. Ours is a predominantly rural and frontier membership. Many of our members are located in communities with populations under 3,000.

Fast, affordable internet access is a serious unmet need for many of our rural and frontier members and the citizens they serve and employee.

Basic internet connectivity is an essential requirement for delivering a broad array of technology-enabled services to older adults in our various LTPAC settings, including telemedicine and health information exchange in skilled nursing facilities. It is also essential for applications that support health and wellness (including telehealth, chronic disease management and remote monitoring (RPM), reduce loneliness and isolation, increase quality of life and, ultimately, enhance independence among community dwelling older adults.

Basic internet connectivity in LTPAC settings is essential to strategic partnerships with physicians and hospitals, as well as other coordinated care delivery models that will improve quality of care and quality of life for older Kansans, while easing the burdens and cost of care.

LeadingAge Kansas supports House Bill 2701 as a means for collaborative definition and evaluation of the broadband needs in Kansas, to fully consider a statewide broadband expansion project and to identify possible funding sources to assure that Kansas citizens and organizations (including LTPAC providers) in every part of the state have access to affordable high-speed internet.

I would be pleased to provide additional information at your request.