



**An independent voice for
those served by KanCare.**

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Chairman Carpenter and members of the House Social Services Budget Committee, thank you for the opportunity to support HB 2549.

KAN is a coalition of more than 50 organizations and individuals who advocate on behalf of the 400,000 Kansans who depend upon the Kansas Medicaid program, KanCare, and its seven HCBS waiver programs for their health care and long-term supports and services.

KAN has strongly advocated for the increase under the Protected Income Level (PIL) to allow waiver recipients to keep up to the federal maximum of 300% of Social Security Income level or \$2,369 a month. We certainly are appreciative of the willingness of the 2019 legislature to begin the process of addressing this issue by taking the first step of upgrading the protected amount from \$747 to \$1,177. We have all seen and heard examples of the positive effect this has had on people's day-to-day lives.

We support the effort of HB 2549 to statutorily index the Protected Income Level but ask the committee to take the final step to bring the Protected Income Level up to the maximum amount allowed under federal law, 300% of SSI.

KDHE estimates that to raise the Protected Income to that level would cost \$11.1 million All Funds; \$4.4 million SGF. This would virtually eliminate the client obligation for almost all persons served by the HCBS waivers. We ask that the committee amend HB 2549 to increase the PIL to the maximum of 300% of SSI. KDHE estimates that this would eliminate the client obligation for nearly all of the waiver population.

It's important to note that this change in policy allows waiver recipients to keep more of their own money each month...money they have earned and/or are eligible for such as retirement and military benefits, disability benefits or benefits from a deceased spouse. For recipients who are looking for employment, the inability to keep more than the current \$1,177/month could be a major obstacle.

Thank you for your support of persons being served by the HCBS waivers and ask that you amend HB 2549 to take the PIL to the maximum allowed under federal law.