



January 29, 2022

RE: HB 2524

To The House Children and Seniors Committee:

We all appreciate the free enterprise in this country and want it to continue blossoming where it can. The pandemic has affected the economy in some surprisingly good ways and then presented some challenges. One of the biggest challenges, currently in the healthcare field, is founding and retaining enough staff. Some burn out, some retiring early, some doing a career change and some of the staff in Long Term Care Homes are jumping to Temporary Agencies. Well, LTC cannot compete with Agency wages. The reimbursement for residents in the Nursing Homes covers maybe 90% of the actual costs of providing care.

We have experienced some of our staff leaving and working for Agencies simply because they get paid double, usually no fringe benefits. At SMRC we have increased our wages twice during the last 6 months by 15%. It will be hard to find enough revenue to sustain those large increases.

We are in support of HB 2525 which would cap the wages at 150% of the median wage in the industry. This, we think, would slow down the exiting of our staff for higher wages. At SMRC the benefits are good, the work environment is excellent and above all we operate as a mission-minded organization. Our employees like working here but some of their friends convince them to jump ship to make a substantial amount more doing Agency.

Please consider moving this Bill forward with efforts from Leading Age Kansas.

Thanks for your efforts.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith Pankratz", is written over the typed name.

Keith Pankratz, CEO