

January 25, 2023

Senate Committee on Financial Institutions and Insurance  
Kansas State Capitol Room 546-S  
300 SW 10th St.  
Topeka, KS 66612

Chair Longbine and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mike Wasmer, and I am the Chief Operating Officer for the Council of Autism Service Providers (CASP). CASP is a non-profit trade association of autism service provider organizations that have demonstrated a commitment to providing evidence-based services, such as applied behavior analysis, to individuals with autism.

I am a resident of Olathe and the father of a young adult with autism. On behalf of CASP and personally, as a past consumer of autism services and an advocate for Kansas families impacted by autism, I support the passage of SB 24.

Along with many other parent advocates, I was involved in the passage of the autism insurance bill in 2014. The insurance lobby inserted the language redefining large and small employers in anticipation of the implementation of a provision of the Affordable Care Act that would define "small employer" in *all states* as having up to 100 employees.

The PACE Act passed in 2015 and amended this provision, giving states the *option* to expand the definition of "small employer." Kansas opted to keep its statutory definition of "small employer" as having 2-50 employees. (KSA 40-2209d)

To my knowledge, the autism insurance statute (KSA 40-2,194) is the only Kansas statute that uses a different definition of "small employer." If it's being implemented as defined there, the consequence is that fewer children with autism are eligible for coverage. Since the bill does not extend coverage to small group plans, families whose fully insured plans are provided by an employer with 50-100 employees would be left out. Passing SB 24 would correct this disparity.

It has been difficult to determine if, or how, payers are implementing this provision. But for consumers and advocates assisting families impacted by autism, it has created significant confusion. I appreciate the committee addressing this issue and ask for your support of SB 24.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Michael Wasmer



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