

**Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee**

**February 09, 2023**

**Senate Bill 6**

Dear Chairwoman Gossage and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present this written testimony against SB 6, which would significantly limit the ability of local health officers to require quarantines for individuals who present with infectious diseases.

Identifying people with infectious diseases is critical to disease prevention and public health. Since ancient times societies have quarantined and isolated people to control disease outbreaks and, today, these actions are backed as successful evidence-based practices.

Since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic three years ago, it is estimated that more than 15 million human beings have died globally. Locally, over 10,000 Kansans have been killed. In my role at a local hospital, I have seen much devastation first-hand, comforting and holding the hands of dying individuals and their families.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and our Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) monitor for things that affect human, animal, and environmental health. Diseases that spread to and from plants, animals, and humans can inflict large amounts of illness, disability, and death. Diseases like tuberculosis (TB), Zika, Ebola, Marburg, measles, polio, etc. are devastating and require significant periods of isolation to prevent their spread. TB and measles are currently two of concern in Kansas.

Right now the scientific community is monitoring the spread of the H5N1 virus (Avian flu). For the first time, it is spreading between mammals. Should it jump to humans, it can take just a matter of weeks to spread globally.

I have seen and experienced the harm that comes from misinformation from unqualified sources. I trust our local health officers to uphold ethically sound policy because they are constantly active in our communities, hard-working, and necessary. Now is the time to build up public health infrastructure, not pull the legs out from under it. This starts with supporting public health's most fundamental principle of preventing unnecessary injury, disease, and death by upholding the requirement to quarantine and isolate sick people.

Allowing SB 6 to become law would be a mistake that would hurt us all by allowing loved ones and strangers to be exposed to deadly and disabling pathogens. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Devin Quinn

Master's Student of Public Health Practice

Lifelong Kansan

[quinnd1227@gmail.com](mailto:quinnd1227@gmail.com)