

STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE CAPITOL
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612
(785) 296-8621
john.eplee@house.ks.gov

163 DEER RUN
ATCHISON, KANSAS 66002



JOHN R. EPLEE, MD
63RD DISTRICT

Proponent Testimony on HB2264

March 2023

Thank you, Chairwoman Gossage, Vice-Chair Erickson, Ranking Minority Petty and members of the Senate Public Health & Welfare Committee.

I appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony today in support of HB 2264. As a practicing (still), Family Physician, like everyone in this room I am so happy that our recent 100-year Pandemic is in the rearview mirror. Unfortunately in the throes of it, I did lose 9 patients to Covid-19 complications. Because of the prevailing infectious disease policies at the facilities where these folks died – all of them passed away isolated and alone. The grief and loss of their loved ones was intolerable. This was/is egregious.

At the heart of it, this is a human rights issue. Many patients, constituents, and Kansans throughout the state have reached out to me to correct this unfairness. Two of them will give proponent testimony here today. While this is a straightforward issue, it actually took 2 bill drafts on the House side and a balloon amendment in committee to address ALL of the stakeholders concerns over this legislation. There was unanimous agreement by all parties including the Kansas Hospital Association, Leading Age, Kansas Nursing Home Association, and the Kansas Medical Society on this final bill. The vote in the House on Final Action was 103-19 on 2/23/2023. The only dissension was over the word change from 'shall' to 'may' on page 2, line 9. Some representatives wanted more consistent regulations. This language change was necessary, as I learned, to address the Assisted Living Association and their concerns on adequate staffing and compliance issues with state policies.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today and give this brief testimony. I will be happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.

Representative John R. Eplee, District #63