

**Testimony by Charlie Hunt with the Johnson County Department of
Health & Environment (JCDHE) to
Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare
Written Proponent for HB 2579 – March 12, 2024**

Chair Gossage and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House Bill 2579, a bill which would amend current law to authorize emergency medical responders to distribute non-prescription, over-the-counter (OTC) medication. JCDHE's mission is to promote and protect the health and environment for all who live, work and play in Johnson County.

OTC medications are something any child can walk into a grocery store and buy, no questions asked. It makes no sense to forbid Emergency Medical Services (EMS) from being allowed to leave behind OTC medications such as naloxone, acetaminophen, and ibuprofen. However, concerns have arisen through the Kansas Board of EMS that they are not allowed to dispense any medications, even OTC options.

HB 2579 adds language to K.S.A. 65-6144 to permit the distribution, by EMS, of most non-prescription OTC medications. JCDHE views this legislation as a logical dispensing activity for EMS to engage in, and as something relevant to public health, given some OTC medications help address public health concerns.

As such, JCDHE asks that the committee recommend HB 2579 favorably for passage.

Sincerely,

Charlie Hunt, Director
Johnson County Department of Health & Environment

