

2012 KPHA  
Executive  
Committee

President  
Shirley Orr  
Public  
Health  
Consultant  
Wichita

President-  
Elect  
Ellen  
Averett  
KUMC-  
Kansas City

Secretary  
Theresa  
Shireman  
KUMC-  
Kansas City

Treasurer  
David  
Cook  
KUMC-  
Kansas City

APHA Rep  
Eldonna  
Chesnut  
Johnson  
CO Health  
Dept  
Olathe

Directors  
At Large:

Mark  
Thompson  
KSDE  
Topeka

Ruth  
Wetta-Hall  
KUSM-  
Wichita

Tanya  
Honderick  
KUMC-  
Kansas City

Staff:  
Elaine  
Schwartz  
Executive  
Director  
Topeka



**Kansas Public Health Association, Inc.**  
*AFFILIATED WITH THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION*  
**P.O. Box 67085**  
**Topeka, Kansas 66667**  
**Phone: 785-233-3103 Fax: 785-233-3439**  
**E-mail: [director@kpha.us](mailto:director@kpha.us)**  
**Web Site: <http://www.kpha.us>**

## **HB 2094 - Vaccinations; exemptions from getting immunizations based on reasons of personal belief**

**Presented to  
House Committee on Health and Human Services**

**By  
Richard Morrissey  
Health Policy Section Chair**

**January 18, 2012**

Chairperson Landwehr and members of the committee, I appreciate the opportunity to present these comments on behalf of the statewide membership of the Kansas Public Health Association.

The enforcement of immunization requirements for children entering childcare facilities and schools has resulted in high immunization levels in Kansas and across the country. These high coverage levels have been shown to have substantially contributed to the reduction of morbidity and mortality for many childhood diseases.

There is evidence that personal belief exemptions are geographically clustered in states where they are allowed. There has been overlap documented between several outbreaks of measles, pertussis and chicken pox and the clusters of unvaccinated children in states that allow personal belief exemptions. Increased numbers of unvaccinated children in an area increase the risk for disease for all, not just those that are unvaccinated by reason of parental choice.

The issue before you has been characterized as the right of parents to decline immunizations based on personal beliefs, but it is just as much the rights of parents and their children who are unvaccinated by reason of age, medical conditions, or religious belief to not face increased risk for disease. We urge you to consider the issue in this light and weigh the interests of the proponents for personal belief exemptions and those others whose risk of disease would increase.

I have attached a two-page document that summarizes and cites the key findings for thirteen studies directly relevant to this issue for your review.

The Kansas Public Health Association respectfully recommends that the committee not report HR 2094 favorable for passage.