



Tom Bell
President and CEO

TO: Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation

FROM: Chad Austin
Senior Vice President, Government Relations

DATE: March 18, 2013

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 231

The Kansas Hospital Association appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 231, which expands the number of counties designated as rural opportunity zones by twenty-two. KHA believes this legislation would further assist in the recruitment of health care providers to many of our rural communities.

Kansas continues to face a shortage of the individuals most important to a strong healthcare system — physicians, nurses and other allied practitioners. According to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, more than 90 Kansas counties have a designation as a primary care health professional shortage area. At present, Kansas averages roughly one physician for every 1,750 individuals. Accordingly, hospitals from all parts of the state continually report difficulty in recruiting and retaining physicians and other health care professionals. Senate Bill 231 would complement the workforce recruitment efforts already underway in our state by providing additional incentives through income tax rebates and student loan forgiveness for those individuals relocating from out of state.

The success of the Kansas health care system in rural areas depends upon the availability of properly educated and trained health care professionals. The Kansas Hospital Association and its members request your support for Senate Bill 231. Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

SN Assmnt & Tax

3/18/13

Attach't # 6