

March 15, 2013

Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

From: Joe D. Davison, MD  
West Wichita Family Physician and Chairman of Kansas Health Information Exchange

Subject: Senate Bill 210, Kansas Health Information Technology Act

Dear Senators:

I appreciate the opportunity to express my support for Senate Bill 210. I hope my unique perspective as a private community family physician and chairman of the Kansas Health Information Exchange will allow me to place before you reasons for approval of Senate Bill 210.

As I mentioned to the committee in my oral testimony, there are three major reasons why Health Information Exchanges fail across the country; the first being sustainability, the second being privacy and security concerns, and the third is lack of collaboration. I am very pleased to report in Kansas we have addressed these issues and have developed viable solutions for them.

In regards to sustainability, we have settled on a subscription model. This model asks providers to provide a subscription for the use of the electronic pathways. The significance of this subscription is the exchange will not be financed by grants, gifts, or other governmental support and will be maintained for the use of the providers and patients to improve healthcare cost and quality.

The second issue is privacy and security. This is a critical concern to physicians. There is no perfect protection for data breaches; however, we use the most secure methods possible. We have modeled our program on the banking and military systems and continually audit for breaches. In addition, we are very serious about instilling responsibility to the providers and to the health information organizations to prevent breaches, and we fully intend to investigate all allegations of breaches.

The third is collaboration, in which Kansas has done a spectacular job. Early in this effort we brought stakeholders from across the state and enlisted their advice. This effort allowed us to grow in a mutual and organic fashion for a viable exchange.

The request from the public-private Kansas Health Information committee to transfer the organization to the public Kansas Department of Health and Environment is a realization of economic realities. The KHIE Board of Directors realized they could serve the development and adoption of Health Information Exchange in Kansas best by being purely regulatory in function. This change in mission allowed the closer collaboration with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. After intense deliberation, the Kansas Health Information Exchange Board voted to transfer regulatory duties to the Department to give an opportunity to save the state thousands of dollars.

As a side note, the transfer of the regulatory duties to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment will allow an even more robust stakeholder input. The bill asks for 22 stakeholders to be involved with the advisory committee. This is a much stronger and collaborative committee structure than our current board and I believe will improve our very unique Kansas Health Information Exchange.

I urge you to support Senate Bill 210, and I remain open for any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,

Joe D. Davison, MD

JDD/mjm