



February 13, 2017

Chairman Alford and members of the House Children and Seniors Committee,

KABC appreciates the opportunity to testify today in support of HB 2232 and for the use of Electronic Monitoring in Adult Care Homes. We ask you to forward this bill as presented.

I am Mitzi McFatrach, executive director of Kansas Advocates for Better Care (KABC). KABC is a non-profit organization, beholden to no commercial interests, supported almost entirely by citizen contributions. Our mission is to improve the quality of long-term care in nursing and assisted type facilities and in-home services. KABC does not provide any form of direct care or receive any government funding. KABC is an established resource for older adults on long-term care issues. Those seeking our guidance and assistance are primarily elders and their families facing difficult, life-altering decisions.

KABC is a strong proponent of protecting the rights of older adults and of measures that prevent abuse, neglect and exploitation of adults in adult care homes. HB 2232 provides a reasonable avenue for an older adult to exercise the right to safety and as a means to prevent repeated or future harm, or in the instance of an elder who lacks cognitive capacity, for their legal representative to do so on the elder's behalf.

The provisions of HB 2232 address the resident's right to privacy along with that of a roommate. HB 2232 avoids needless burden or cost to older adults who wish to utilize its protections. In order for older adults to benefit from what this bill makes possible, it is of critical importance that it be easily implemented and affordably. Older adults in care facilities already experience tremendous physical and financial drain on their limited resources. Older adults with dementia or other conditions which challenge cognitive functioning most likely will benefit only if their family or legal representative can implement electronic monitoring and which is not overly complicated or burdensome.

Kansas would join a number of other states which have implemented electronic monitoring legislation to safeguard residents. I applaud the perspective voiced by Doug Stark, owner of Comfort Care in Wichita where a nurse aide abusing an 87 year old woman was captured on a recording, "A situation like this is an owner's worst nightmare. At least it was uncovered by this [video recording]." Stark encourages families to put cameras in rooms. He's also behind a push for a statewide law that would require cameras to be allowed. (reported 2/2/2017 on KWCH12 news).

Mitzi E. McFatrach, on behalf of the board and our members