

House Bill 2149
Testimony of Martin Ahrens

Thank you for providing this opportunity for public testimony regarding House Bill 2149.

As a member of the public at large, it appears that the mission of the BSRB is to protect the public. Whereas the mission of KNASW is to advocate for social workers. HB 2149 would remove the thoughtful system of checks and balances implemented by the Kansas Legislature. As a member of the public, I want an agency that has as its primary mission the protection of the public. HB2149 instead appears to put the fox in charge of the hen house.

House Bill 2149 proposes to create an entirely new social work structure to do the work that is currently being done most efficiently and effectively by the BSRB. The new agency appears to be unnecessary and redundant. In my view, HB 2149 distorts the vital and independent objectivity of these two organizations. Further, the change will gain no apparent operational advantage.

The primary thrust of HB 2149 appears to advocate for greater representation by social workers. Proponents of the bill seem to overlook a significant fact. Under the current statutory framework, social workers already have an Advisory Committee composed of 9 social workers. This Committee has direct access and input to the BSRB. I believe the current statutory framework gives social workers ample representation.

In my judgement, HB 2149 would open the flood gates to all professions wishing to request their own professional regulatory boards. This would not only be tremendously costly but also would reverse the efficient and I think cost effective action of this legislature in consolidating the seven professions under the unified regulation of the BSRB.

In conclusion and for the reasons stated above, I strongly support the current statutory structure and respectfully oppose HB2149.

Thank you.