

March 8th, 2017

Testimony in favor of HB2124

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a 2nd-year medical student at the University of Kansas School of Medicine writing in support of HB2124. I have lived in Kansas my whole life and have spent the large part of the last six years involved in its healthcare system: I volunteered for four years at Lawrence Memorial Hospital Emergency Department (Lawrence, KS); spent several months assisting underserved populations with enrolling in the ACA (Wyandotte County Public Health Dept.); and have been devoting much of my time in medical school working in our student-run free clinic for the poor and underserved in Wyandotte County (JayDoc Free Clinic). I have thus been made well-aware of Kansas' shortcomings regarding access to mental health care and its providers—a common theme is that the patients who need it most often have the hardest time accessing it (financial/geographical concerns and provider availability are among the greatest limitations). Of note is the fact that my experiences have largely been restricted to urban-suburban areas; I can only imagine that these issues become more difficult to solve in rural areas.

Because of these concerns, I find that this bill proposes a simple and effective solution for increasing the number of psychiatry providers that will contribute to improved outcomes for Kansas' mental health care needs. The structural foundation is already in place (KMSL program) – why not add seats for psychiatry (certainly a 'primary care' field) residents?

Sincerely,

Sebastian Schoneich

M.D. Candidate (2019)

University of Kansas School of Medicine