



To: Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

**From: Rachelle Colombo
Director of Government Affairs**

Date: March 16, 2017

Re: HB 2205; requiring meningitis vaccine

The Kansas Medical Society appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2205, adding meningitis to the list of required vaccinations for adolescents. This is a very simple bill aimed at reducing adolescent exposure to a preventable disease with long-term impact. Meningitis vaccine is currently recommended for adolescents, but is not required.

Because the rate of meningitis spikes for adolescents between the ages of 16-23 and because Kansas's rates of meningitis vaccination are low under current guidelines, we believe it is in the best interest of public health to require this vaccination.

According to information provided by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's website, Kansas has had a total of 44 cases of Meningococcemia in the last five years. There were 10 cases in 2007; 7 cases in 2008; 14 cases in 2009; 8 cases in 2010; and 5 cases in 2011. So far this year Kansas has had four cases. There have been five deaths due to bacterial meningitis in Kansas since 2007.

Though the vaccination rate on recommended vaccines is very low, the majority of Kansans are up to date on required vaccines. Considering this fact and that this is a preventable disease, the Kansas Medical Society supports HB 2205 and requests for favorable consideration. Thank you.