

March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017

RE: Testimony in favor of House Bill 2076

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

As a trauma center, Stormont Vail Health strives to provide the utmost quality care to injured patients. We treat victims of motor vehicle crashes every day, and those who were wearing seatbelts in the crash consistently present with less severe injuries than those who were not belted. All too often, we do not get the chance to care for unbelted motor vehicle crash victims at all, because they die upon impact.

Our mission at Stormont Vail Health is “Working together to improve the health of our community.” In trauma care, we focus not only on providing optimal care of the injured patient, but are dedicated to preventing injuries as well. Education and enforcement initiatives have drastically increased the use of seatbelts throughout the years, proving that they are effective, but we have significant strides to make in this area.

It is for these reasons that **Stormont Vail Health supports HB 2076** “Creating the seat belt safety fund and increasing the fine for adult seat belt violations,” and a return of the seatbelt fine from \$10 to \$30. This increase in fine will not only encourage people to buckle up, but the additional \$20 will be used to fund the Seat Belts are For Everyone (SAFE) program so that it can be administered statewide. This student-run safety education program has received national recognition for its proven effectiveness in raising seatbelt usage.

Seatbelts save lives and reduce injuries. We are grateful to the Kansas House of Representatives for voting favorably for this bill, and respectfully request that Senate Transportation Committee members also support HB 2076. Thank you for your support.

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