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Kansas Senate Public Health & Welfare Committee
Opponent Testimony re: SB 252
Presented by Roger Marshall, M.D.
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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I was blessed to practice medicine in a rural community for more than 25 years. During that time, I have helped run a hospital, supervised county health systems and managed a private practice. Through that experience, I have gained a deep understanding of our nation and state's medical system. There was nothing more broken than the Medicaid system. It needs overhauled, not expanded. Simply stated, there are better options out there for providing healthcare to those who depend on Medicaid or those struggling to get healthcare.

What we do know is the ACA, with all its federal government control and regulations, resulted in doubling of insurance premiums and made healthcare unaffordable to many. We can't repeat these same mistakes.

For most of my career, I was the only OB/GYN in my community and surrounding communities accepting Medicaid patients. I struggled to find specialty physicians who would consult on patients, and found the paperwork and reimbursement process cumbersome and counterproductive.

Medicaid does not grant patients full access to our healthcare system and often leaves them with few options and incomplete care. I want all Kansans to have meaningful access to our healthcare system.

We must preserve and improve a type of Medicaid system for those who truly need it – disadvantaged children, vulnerable elderly and those with disabilities. Implementing a successful healthcare plan for this group of people will be very different in rural Kansas than large population centers. We cannot allow the federal government to micromanage and mismanage yet another system. This Medicaid expansion program is not free, and not without strings. It is, instead, another example of tax dollars being used to subsidize a government program that will only continue to grow and put our nation into greater debt. And it will ultimately bankrupt our healthcare system, all while failing to meet the goals of providing meaningful healthcare for the most vulnerable of our society.

In Congress, I serve as the chair of the Republican Study Committee's health care task force. In that role, I've spent most of the past year working with President Trump and the White House compiling real solutions to our healthcare challenges, especially addressing the cost of healthcare. I believe – at the state and federal level – we can create a healthcare environment that delivers real, affordable healthcare to all. Medicaid expansion is not the answer, but together, with competition, innovation and transparency, we can address the true roots of the problem.

Sincerely,

Roger Marshall

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Great Bend