



To: House Health and Human Services Committee

From: Rachelle Colombo
Director of Government Affairs

Date: January 24, 2017

Subject: HB 2045; re-instating institutional licenses under the Board of Healing Arts

The Kansas Medical Society appreciates the opportunity to appear today on HB 2045, which would re-establish institutional licenses under the Kansas Board of Healing Arts.

During the 2015 legislative session, a comprehensive bill was passed to modernize the Healing Arts Act by implementing uniform terminology across the regulated professions. A long-standing provision allowing institutional licenses was inadvertently stricken, affecting a small number of Kansas physicians whose sole practice is providing psychiatric services for state institutions.

This provision was originally enacted several decades ago to address a number of overlapping problems. Some foreign medical school graduates of accredited schools were unable to qualify for active licensure due to a variety of problems not related to their competency. Some came from countries experiencing civil unrest or other barriers that made receiving the necessary affirmation of accreditation necessary for issuance of an active license impossible. At the same time, the state was struggling to attract qualified physicians into psychiatric care as employees of state institutions. The jobs simply were not as competitive as other opportunities for physicians with active unrestricted licenses.

As a result, institutional licenses were implemented as a means of solving both problems. Under an institutional license, a physician having completed their medical education may provide psychiatric services at a state institution as long as they work under a protocol with a physician with an active license in Kansas.

Not realizing there were a handful of physicians still practicing under an institutional license, the language was inadvertently stricken in 2015 rendering those physicians unable to provide psychiatric services, and state institutions without a physician to directly care for mental health patients.

HB 2045 simply reinstates the stricken language and restores the role of institutional licenses, ensuring that qualified physicians are able to practice and patients continue receiving care. We respectfully request that the committee favorably consider HB 2045. Thank you.