



**Saint Francis  
Community Services®**

*Serving Children and Families Since 1945*

**Testimony to Kansas Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee (Written only)  
Monday, March 22, 2017**

**Support** for HB2217, Standards governing the use and administration of emergency opioid antagonists

Madam Chairwoman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to come before the committee to provide comments **in support of HB 2217**.

Saint Francis Community Services (SFCS) is a Kansas-based, mission-driven nonprofit centered in the Episcopal tradition. With roots as a home for ‘wayward youths’ in Ellsworth, Kansas in 1945, Saint Francis Community Services has developed a range of services for children, adults, and families in Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Mississippi, and internationally in our El Salvador office. Saint Francis Community Services provides residential services, substance abuse treatment programs, behavioral health, and child welfare case management. Saint Francis Community Services works to *provide healing and hope to children and families*.

SFCS focuses on providing quality care to vulnerable populations. Recent accomplishments include:

- Opening an innovative residential program for child victims of commercial sexual exploitation
- Developing programming to meet the legal, cultural, and resettlement needs of cross-border children and families whether residing in the US or abroad
- Award-winning residential programming for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Collaborating with research partners to contribute to the body of evidence-based data related to parent engagement, child and family assessment, and trauma-informed services in foster care
- Opening a state-of-the-art Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility for youth with significant mental health and behavioral challenges

As a service provider to children and families in crisis, SFCS has witnessed first-hand the impact of opioid addiction among parents struggling to care for their children. Substance abuse – and particularly the opioid epidemic – is emerging as a major contributing factor in increased pressure on foster care systems nationwide.<sup>1</sup> While Kansans begin to grapple with needed efforts to interrupt the rate of addiction, provide effective and affordable treatment options, and support families and children impacted by addiction; this bill can save lives. **Saint Francis Community Services supports ensuring access to emergency lifesaving care** to people who are going to be present when overdoses happen. Saint Francis Community Services supports HB2217.

Thank you for your consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> Teresa Wiltz, **Drug-Addiction Epidemic Creates Crisis in Foster Care**, Pew Charitable Trust, October 07, 2016; Dayna Bowen Matthew and Alice M. Rivlin, **Unfinished business: Bipartisan help for child victims of the opioid crisis**, The Hill, January 12, 2017