

THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS  
CANCER CENTER

TO: Chairman Vickrey  
FROM: Roy A. Jensen, M.D., Director  
RE: SB 32  
DATE: March 6, 2019

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Chairman Vickrey,

Thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony to the committee regarding SB 32. I am Dr. Roy Jensen, director of The University of Kansas Cancer Center. As a National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated cancer center, KU Cancer Center must demonstrate that it is significantly improving the health of Kansans and reducing the cancer burden in our region. One way we can dramatically impact health in Kansas is by ensuring that Kansans with pre-existing conditions will not be discriminated against and that access to quality health insurance is not harmed by unregulated, substandard plans that segment the individual market and drive up costs.

Kansans need to be able to count on their health insurance coverage through cancer diagnosis and treatment into survivorship. The cost of cancer treatment is significant, and unregulated plans that are not required by law to provide consumer protections are dangerous for individuals and families faced with the challenge of navigating through the complex, expensive steps of cancer treatment. Plans that impose restrictions like waiting periods for treatment of pre-existing conditions or limits on the amount of coverage allowed for prescription drugs will jeopardize the patient's ability to obtain the care needed to survive their disease.

It is dangerous for the patient and the individual market to promote the growth of a coverage product without proper oversight or protection for the Kansas health consumer. The sale of the proposed health benefit plans will have consequences for those Kansans who need health insurance that guarantees their pre-existing condition and essential health benefits will be covered, and that they won't be charged more just because they survived cancer. The legislature must continue to discuss ways to provide better access to health insurance for more Kansans because meaningful coverage is critical in the fight against cancer. However, SB 32 misses the mark and poses harm to Kansans with pre-existing conditions. I urge you to reject this legislation.

