



To: House Health and Human Services Committee

From: Rachelle Colombo  
Executive Director

Date: February 22, 2021

Re: HB 2234, establishing medical direction for emergency medical services

The Kansas Medical Society appreciates the opportunity to provide comments in support of HB 2234, establishing medical direction for emergency medical services.

HB 2234 defines “medical oversight” as the review, approval, and implementation of medical protocols as well as the approval and monitoring of activities, competency, and education of emergency medical service providers. The bill shifts the responsibility of medical protocol approval to a medical director designated by an operator. Current law requires this approval from either a county medical society, or medical staff of a hospital to which the ambulance service primarily transports, or if either of those are unable or unavailable the medical advisory council of the Emergency Medical Services Board.

Emergency medical service providers include an array of professionals with varying levels of medical training and support for a broad range of services. The Kansas Medical Society and Board of Emergency Medical Services have been in talks for many years about how to address the need for medical direction. When the framework for EMS services was established, the landscape was entirely different and it was appropriate to rely upon county medical societies to approve protocols and provide necessary medical oversight. But as the services have expanded and county societies do not exist in all communities, the problem has left many providers without the designated body to provide the oversight that statute requires and patients deserve.

HB 2234 gives EMS flexibility in utilizing alternative routes for procuring medical oversight while still ensuring that the oversight itself is provided by a physician. This necessary update to current law would surely already be on the books but for the abrupt adjournment of the 2020 session. HB 2234 is carefully considered and critical to continuing high quality emergency services statewide. We respectfully urge your support of HB 2234.