



To: Chair Carpenter and Members, House Social Service Budget Committee
From: Rachel Monger, Vice President of Government Affairs, LeadingAge Kansas
Date: February 23, 2021

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2249

Thank you, Chairman Carpenter and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to provide support to House Bill 2249. I am Rachel Monger, Vice President of Government Affairs for LeadingAge Kansas, the state association for not-for-profit aging services. We have 160 members across Kansas, which include not-for-profit nursing homes, retirement communities, hospital long-term care units, assisted living, homes plus, housing, low-income housing, home health agencies, home and community based service programs, PACE and Meals on Wheels. Our members serve more than 25,000 elders each day.

LeadingAge Kansas supports changing the Protected Income Limit for HCBS and PACE participants to 150% of Supplemental Security Income. A protected income limit that keeps pace with the cost of living is essential for people receiving services in their communities.

In 2019 the Kansas Legislature raised the Medicaid protected income limit to \$1,177 per month. This was the first increase in the protected income limit since 2008, and the decade-long wait left many people living under desperate circumstances. In order to avoid another long wait before such an increase, we support a yearly cost of living adjustment to allow more people to live in the community with dignity and avoid premature nursing home placements. Changing the protected income limit to 150% of SSI will eliminate the client obligation for more than 90% of participants, and will make assisted living and PACE participation more financially viable.

We thank the committee for its time and consideration of this issue. We hope you will support the passage of House Bill 2249.