

**Testimony on House Bill 2249  
Social Service Budget Committee  
Sarah Fertig, State Medicaid Director  
Kansas Department of Health and Environment  
February 23, 2021**

Chairman Carpenter and Members of the Committee:

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment Division of Health Care Finance (KDHE-DHCF) supports House Bill 2249, which would codify in statute an important policy change that has been in effect since 2019.

In 2019, the Legislature passed a budget proviso that directed the state Medicaid program to increase the protected income limit (PIL) from \$747/month to \$1,177/month. That change became effective via agency policy on September 1, 2019. KDHE then began the process of updating our regulation (K.A.R. 129-6-103) to reflect that policy change. After some delays due to the pandemic, that regulation became effective on January 1, 2021.

As a result of the PIL increase, 92% of HCBS and PACE members now have no client obligation owed to the state, and an additional 2% have a client obligation of less than \$100. The PIL increase also affords these members the dignity that comes with being able to better provide for oneself. Following the 2019 PIL increase, KanCare members have reported that they are finally able to afford diapers, fresh fruit, new shoes, and public transportation, and can also afford to have groceries every day of the month.

KDHE-DHCF appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill, and would ask for the committee members to support its passage.

Sarah Fertig  
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