



Geary County
Health Department
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Testimony of Geary County Health Department to the
House Committee on Social Services Budget
Proponent for HB 2248 • February 24, 2021

Chairman Carpenter and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to supply written testimony in support of House Bill 2248 regarding increasing state financial assistance to local health departments under specified circumstances. HB 2248 tweaks K.S.A. 65-242, a law governing formula funding for local health departments, so that the minimum payment value of \$7,000 will increase to \$15,000 so long as at least \$3 million is budgeted for the formula. The purpose behind this change is to provide an inflation adjustment, as the \$7,000 minimum has been in place since around 1992, and the buying power of the dollar has diminished since then due to inflation.

While our health department currently receives over the \$7,000 minimum (68 counties, out of 105, are assigned just the minimum amount)¹ we view this update as critical for our more rural peers to continue to provide quality public health services. We understand that changing the minimum without a budget increase would negatively impact the larger counties, and hence why we support HB 2248 and its language that only increases the minimum if at least \$3 million is allocated into this formula (the allocation has been at \$2.2 million since 1992). At \$3 million departments like mine will also see an increase versus what we receive at the \$2.2 million allocation level.

\$7,000 just does not go very far today but a \$15,000 threshold would allow rural counties to achieve better public health outcomes. The law will still require a local match equal to the state's share and has penalties if local tax revenue allocations drop versus the prior year. Local government will continue to pay its fair share. This bill, on its own, has no fiscal impact (minimum payments only activate if enough funding is there for them, otherwise equal distribution of available funds happens). It is for these reasons my health department supports HB 2248 and asks that the committee report it favorably for passage. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Tammy A. Von Busch DVM, MPH
Director, Geary County Health Department

¹ Current planned SFY 2022 state formula distribution figures are available at:
<https://khap2.kdhe.state.ks.us/KGMS/KGMSContent/documents/SF/2022%20SF/SFY2022%20State%20Formula%20Population-Award%20.pdf>