

WRITTEN TESTIMONY: HB2328.LisaVayda.2-13-23.PRO

Chairman and Rep. Owens and members of the Kansas House Committee on Corrections & Juvenile Justice,

My name is Lisa Vayda, and I am a pharmacist and health economist in Wichita, KS. I am a proponent of House Bill 2328.

As a Kansas citizen, health care provider, economist, and community advocate, I have worked for several years battling this awful opioid epidemic. The grim facts are that drug overdose deaths are increasing, especially involving synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl. Per the National Center for Health Statistics: Predicted deaths from drug overdoses in Kansas increased by 10.2% from August 2021 to August 2022 (627 deaths to 691 deaths). (<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>)

Fentanyl is showing up as counterfeit Percocet, Adderall, and Xanax or contaminating other illicit drugs, such as cocaine and methamphetamine. By employing fentanyl test strips, studies have shown that people who use drugs can be more informed about the drugs they are buying and using, leading to behavior change and adoption of harm reduction strategies. (<https://harmreduction.org/issues/fentanyl/fentanyl-test-strip-pilot/>)

Furthermore, federal grant guidelines changed, and federal funding may be used to purchase fentanyl test strips in applicable programs. (<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/p0407-Fentanyl-Test-Strips.html>). This includes the CDC's Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) cooperative in which Kansas is a participant. However, organizations in Kansas cannot do so because of the current state statutes.

As a health economist, I offer the following cost/benefit analysis:

COST:

Fentanyl Test Strip:	\$1
Ambulance/Emergency Department Visit:	\$2000 minimum (HCF is infrequently reimbursed)
A Human Life	PRICELESS

BENEFIT:

The life of a Kansas Citizen is saved.

I am representing many Kansas Citizens who have shared their heartbreaking narratives about their child, loved one, colleague, or friend who might be alive today if they were made aware of the dangerous fentanyl lacing their drugs by using testing strips and acting accordingly. Passage of Kansas HB2328 would be a simple step that Kansas Legislators could take to improve harm reduction measures in our great state and potentially save lives.

Respectfully submitted,

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