



TO: Rep. William Sutton, Chairman
House Committee on Insurance

FROM: Sam Antonios, M.D.
Chief Clinical Officer
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SUBJECT: Testimony in support of HB 2283

DATE: February 20, 2023

On behalf of Ascension Via Christi, one of the state's largest non-profit healthcare organizations, I write to you today to express our support for HB 2283. This proposed legislation will help achieve three critically important goals: 1) help prevent unnecessary delays in providing critical care; 2) help reduce the administrative burden that has compounded workforce shortages at hospitals and healthcare facilities across Kansas; and 3) provide greater transparency to patients and providers in the utilization of prior authorization processes.

The scope of the problems associated with the existing prior authorization process is profound. A 2021 survey by the American Medical Association (AMA) [found](#) more than 90 percent of physicians across the U.S. reported prior authorization delayed access to necessary care. In fact, 34 percent reported a patient experienced a serious adverse event due to this kind of administrative delay.

The need for this kind of legislation has led to a growing and bipartisan movement to reform the prior authorization process in many states, the U.S. Congress, and by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Nevertheless, the challenges associated with existing prior authorization processes persist, and swift action is needed to provide patients with relief. In Kansas, we have such an opportunity through HB 2283.

It is important to understand that providers in Kansas must navigate unique prior authorization requirements for each payer. The review of materials, management of requests for additional information, and tracking the status of an approval, denial or appeal, can occur over days or weeks. This inevitably contributes to delays in diagnoses and treatments for patients suffering with serious conditions. It also deters patients from pursuing the care that they need. This barrier to appropriate and necessary care is detrimental to public health and avoidable.

The administrative complexity of the prior authorization process also presents a significant burden on physicians, physician assistants, nurses and other clinical staff, who would much rather be focused on delivering the care that patients deserve. The AMA reports physicians and staff spend an average of [13 hours a week](#) – nearly a third of the typical American workweek – completing these bureaucratic processes. This inefficiency impedes the provision of care, and it carries tremendous fiscal and human costs.

Hospitals in Kansas and across the U.S. are dealing with historic staffing challenges. The American Hospital Association has called the workforce shortage a “[national emergency](#).” This shortage is partially a result of the unrelenting workload that healthcare workers faced during the pandemic and the “Great Resignation” that followed. Administrative burdens, such as numerous and varied prior authorization requirements, add to burnout rates and exacerbate existing workforce issues.

HB 2283 sets out clearer requirements in terms of timeframes for prior authorization processes, including review, requests for additional information, and appeals. This legislation properly recalibrates the prior authorization process in Kansas to center around the patient and the provision of high-quality care in an appropriate, timely and safe manner.

It also brings vital transparency to a process that otherwise can be opaque. By establishing clear parameters in the prior authorization process, HB 2283 will strengthen confidence in our healthcare system and provide patients and providers with the transparency they need to navigate these processes effectively.

This measure charts a clear and direct path for Kansas to address a critical inefficiency affecting public health, the healthcare workforce and system transparency. I appreciate the Committee’s consideration of this important matter and respectfully request members approve HB 2283.