

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB404

February 8, 2024

Chair Gossage and the Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing the Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics to provide written testimony in support of SB404. This bill empowers physicians and other health care providers to administer expedited partner therapy (EPT) when the patient's sexual partner is unlikely or unable to undergo examination, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

The Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (KAAP) represents more than 400 of the practicing pediatric providers in the state. The KAAP has the fundamental goal that all children and adolescents in Kansas may grow up safe and strong. SB404 is crucial as it can positively impact the health of our youngest Kansans, including newborns, as well as adolescents and young adults in the state.

Left untreated, STIs can lead to severe consequences, such as premature labor resulting in long-term developmental and health issues, and even infant mortality. They can contribute to significant health problems like pelvic inflammatory disease and fertility issues. Rising STI rates in Kansas over the past decade, nearly doubling, is particularly concerning.

Expedited partner therapy is widely practiced by physicians and endorsed by reputable professional associations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the Society for Adolescent Medicine, and the American Medical Association. Numerous studies have shown that EPTs lead to reductions in sexually transmitted infections, with the CDC citing a decrease in chlamydia prevalence by about 20% and gonorrhea by about 50% at follow-up. EPT has demonstrated both safety and effectiveness.

It is worth noting that 46 states have already enacted similar legislation, allowing for the treatment of sexual partners of diagnosed patients without significant adverse events reported. SB404 provides Kansas with a proven tool to address and mitigate sexually transmitted infections.

The KAAP urges the Senate Ways and Means Committee to advance SB404, moving it out of committee to the Senate floor for passage. We appreciate your time and consideration, and we are available as a resource and partner for all matters impacting children's health and well-being.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chair, Public Policy Committee

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