



**Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare  
February 14, 2024**

Chair Gossage, Vice Chair Erickson, and Members of the Committee, on behalf of the Immunize Kansas Coalition (IKC), this written testimony is submitted in **opposition of Senate Bill 390**.

IKC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan coalition of Kansas health care providers, health department officials, researchers and educators working together to improve the health of Kansans through improved vaccination rates to protect against vaccine-preventable disease. IKC is an independent and objective source of evidence and facts. IKC's members volunteer their time and resources to support our mission of protecting every Kansan from vaccine preventable diseases.

We oppose SB 390 because we must maintain the already existing and working processes for vaccine requirements and exemptions for schools and child care spaces; protect the freedom of private businesses and healthcare entities to set vaccine requirements in the best interests of their employees and patrons; and for state and local officials to retain the authority to isolate and quarantine when necessary to stop an infectious disease outbreak.

Vaccine requirements are determined based on scientific recommendations for immunizations. These requirements keep children and adolescents safe by ensuring they are protected when at schools, where potential exposure to life-altering diseases is high. And, the state already has processes in place for obtaining an exemption from vaccine requirements in school and child care settings. **SB 390 unnecessarily creates yet another layer and process and a chilling effect.**

This bill also seeks to take away the freedom of private businesses to have vaccine requirements in the workplace and determine what is in the best interest of their employees and patrons. Employers have the right to protect their employees and customers and establish employee qualifications which can include health and safety standards.

**Consider the implications of preventing employers in sectors such as veterinarian care, agriculture, laboratories, septic services, hospitality and food service from setting workplace safety standards to keep their employees and customers safe from diseases such as foodborne and waterborne Hepatitis A, body fluid transmissible Hepatitis B, and Tetanus that can be transmitted from soil, dust and manure through puncture wounds and cuts.**

Also consider the impacts on hospitals, long-term care, and our most vulnerable Kansans, especially for those at high-risk for contracting and having complications from vaccine-preventable diseases (e.g. immunocompromised, infants, elderly). Workplace vaccination requirements as set by employers are crucial to protect their workforce, as well as those they serve.



Finally, keeping nursing home residents, healthcare facilities staff, and immunocompromised residents safe should be our priority.

**The data is clear that higher levels of staff vaccination are linked to fewer outbreaks among residents, many of whom are at an increased risk of infection, hospitalization, or death.**

Predictors of transmission in long-term care settings include congregate living, personal care requirements that necessitate physical proximity, increased frailty or compromised health status among residents, and behavioral and cognitive challenges that complicate infection prevention and control (IPC) measures. Many older residents are in their last year of life and have multiple health conditions, often coupled with physical dependency or cognitive impairment.

**For these reasons and more, the Immunize Kansas Coalition opposes SB 390 and urges the Committee to not pass it out. Thank you, and do not hesitate to contact me at [ggone@immunizekansascoalition.org](mailto:ggone@immunizekansascoalition.org) with any questions.**

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