



TO: House Health and Human Services Committee

FROM: Tara Mays, Vice President State Legislative Affairs

DATE: February 12, 2025

RE: House Bill 2249

The Kansas Hospital Association (KHA) appreciates the opportunity to appear before you to support House Bill 2249.

Kansas Hospital's continue to struggle financially, but we have taken innovative approaches to trying to deliver care in new ways. One of the things our state has been a leader on is the development of the Rural Emergency Hospital Model. Following the new federal designation passed in 2020, Kansas was the first state in 2021 to designate that hospital type in our state statutes.

Since that time we have had three hospitals convert to a Rural Emergency Hospital; Ark City, LaCrosse, and Moundridge.

We knew that like any new program, there would likely be lessons along the way. What Senate Bill 82 does is attempt to address one of the issues that we have now run across as hospitals look to transition to this new model of care.

Skilled nursing facility beds provide an important service in communities, the beds are to provide medical care and rehabilitation for patients who need assistance with daily activities on a short term basis. While, this bill may seem to address only one hospitals issue, currently many hospitals in Kansas have skilled nursing beds.

Previously, all of these beds were licensed with a hospital under the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, now that a hospital has shifted to a Rural Emergency Hospital, and learned that the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services will be now licensing those skilled nursing beds, we need the direct the Secretary of the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services to grant a physical environment waiver to ensure that we aren't placing unnecessary regulatory burdens on these services as if they are a brand new facility.

Our Hospitals have a long history of serving the community through skilled nursing and we don't want to see more communities lose these critically needed services.

As more hospitals look to become Rural Emergency Hospitals in future we want to ensure that the state doesn't create a regulatory burden that could make this option unattainable.

We thank the committee for their time and hope that you will support House Bill 2249.