



March 7, 2025

House Committee on Health and Human Services

Opponent Testimony Sub for SB 29- Written only

Kimberly Martin MEd, BSN, RN

KSNO Legislative Chair

Chair Carpenter and Members of the Committee-

The Kansas School Nurses Organization (KSNO) **opposes Sub for SB 29- Removing the authority of the county or joint board of health or local health officer to prohibit public gatherings when necessary for the control of infectious or contagious disease.**

KSNO wants state and local health officials to retain the ability to enact all public health safety measures that are necessary to protect the public from the effects of communicable diseases, including severe illness and death. These officials should be able to follow the best evidenced based practice in dealing with any communicable disease including limiting public gatherings when necessary. KSNO believes the public health officers and joint boards of health are the ones most experienced with mitigation strategies to limit dangers to the public from any infectious disease.

Local Public Health Officers and joint boards of health have experts in epidemiology, immunology, and public health and we want them to have the ability to order a limit on public gathering size when necessary. While this bill would allow public health officers to continue to make recommendations to limit the public gathering size, we feel that is not a strong enough measure. We also feel that local health officers already answer to the board of health, which is often the county commission (which are elected positions) or occasionally when it is a joint board of health, they are appointed by elected officials. Joint boards occur when cities and counties are jointly running a health department or when there are multi-county health departments. In the case of city-county boards, the city voices are lost, as the county commission would have the decision on limiting public gatherings.

KSNO urges you to vote NO on Sub for SB 29

Kimberly Martin MEd, BSN, RN

Kansas School Nurses Organization Legislative Chair

on behalf of the Board of the Kansas School Nurses Organization