

Date: January 13, 2026

To: Madame Chair Rep. Susan Humphries and members of the Kansas House
Judiciary Committee

From: Michelle Baalman, M.D.

Re: Verbal proponent support of HB 2426: Defining the term "gender" to mean biological sex at birth for purposes of statutory construction, directing the division of motor vehicles to invalidate and reissue driver's licenses when necessary to correct the gender identification on such licenses and directing the office of vital statistics to invalidate and reissue birth certificates when necessary to correct the sex identification on such certificates.

Representative Humphries and members of the House Judiciary Committee,
thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify in favor of HB 2426.

My name is Michelle Baalman and I am a physician practicing Hospitalist medicine at a Level 1 Trauma Center in Wichita, KS. I have a master's degree in pharmacology from Tulane University School of Medicine and a doctorate in medicine degree from University of Kansas School of Medicine. I have practiced primarily in Wichita for the past 9 years. I have published and presented research in pre-hospital trauma assessment. I am certified by the American Board of Family Medicine.

This is important legislation from a medical perspective. In the rapid assessment of life-threatening medical scenarios, accurate and clear objective data can often mean the difference between life and death. In medicine gender is as critical in medical decision making as age, past medical/surgical history and vital signs. A rapid and accurate assessment of a patient's gender helps to more precisely define a list of possible pathologies. Delay in defining gender could lead to delay in diagnosis and treatment. This can mean the difference between survival and death in emergent cases. Many surgical emergencies are gender-specific.

Additionally, gender helps to delineate risk for some of the most common medical problems in our population. These gender specific risk factors are studied and proven using objective sex-assigned-at-birth (chromosomal make-up) and not a choice made later in life on a driver's license. The more accurate a patient's information is to their biologic make-up, the higher likelihood of life-saving intervention. Incongruent information with reported gender versus biologic make-up will certainly lead to avoidable devastating outcomes.

Thank you for closing the gap with this legislation that, if passed, will allow for critical clarity in medical diagnosis and treatment and promote better care.

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