

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2716

TO: House Committee on Health and Human Services

Chairman Morrison and members of the House Health and Human Services Committee:

I am Lou A. Esplund, a nursing home administrator for the past 28 years and chairperson of the Board of Adult Care Home Administrators (BACHA). I have many concerns about House Bill 2716 and would like to share some of those concerns.

There are several specific items in this bill that I see as extremely problematic.

1. Requiring preceptor education. The bill implies that this is necessary to increase the number of administrators practicing in the State of Kansas. I see this as an additional roadblock to anyone seeking a license to practice in our state. A preceptor is an administrator of a Kansas nursing facility that has had a minimum of three years of experience and has no substandard quality of care citations and no charges against their license. These administrators volunteer their time and energy, plus the time and energy of their entire staff to an administrator in training (AIT) who has to spend 480 hours in the facility, and now we are asking this volunteer to spend their time and money to take some kind of course in mentoring. I know of no other profession that requires this of their preceptors. One of my degrees from KU is in education, and the teachers I practiced under certainly did not have to take additional education courses to allow me to use their classroom. And logically, it seems inappropriate. The preceptor portion of the AIT is done prior to the candidate taking the test. The AITs that successfully pass the State and National Test and become administrators must have gleaned enough information from their formal education, plus the practicum to be successful. I have seen no data that substantiates administrators leaving the field correlating to an unsatisfactory experience with their preceptor. As administrator from a small rural community, taking any further educational courses is a problem (we currently have to have 50 hours every two years). I would have to go to an urban area, and at a minimum it would take two or three days away from my facility, plus several hundred dollars in expenses, in order that I could volunteer my time to a student.

2. This legislation would further limit any latitude we have in granting reciprocity to an administrator from another state. Getting past the 480 hour requirement is very difficult. They must have had a comparable course (determined by a Kansas college to be comparable) and few states have such a requirement, and now we would have no ability to grant such privilege as an equivalency unless they also had a preceptor that had some kind of "preceptor" training.

3. This bill would also negate a previous regulation that was adopted that allows some credit toward the 480 hours by taking certain courses and by certain types of work experience.

4. The BACHA board has the responsibility to create and develop educational standards for Kansas Administrators. It seems reasonable that before this type of legislation is passed, this

board would have the opportunity to work with those wanting change and given a chance for their input. This board has a broad base and has always been very willing to hear concerns from administrators, professional organizations and citizens. Our board is composed of two administrators who have served many years in that capacity, we have a medical doctor, an attorney, a speech pathologist, an excellent consumer representative and an assisted living representative who also holds an administrator's license and teaches at the college level. We have two outstanding attorneys to guide us and we would like the opportunity to work on whatever problems there are in the AIT course of study.

5. I would agree that some students in this program have voiced concerns, but I feel we first need to work with the colleges and their coordinators to develop new procedures and programs to meet these concerns.

6. With regard to moving the board from KDHE, at this time, I feel we have access to a competent, cooperative staff from that department that makes our job as committee members very enjoyable. Moving this board to another department was examined several years ago and there did not seem to be a good match. We looked particularly at Behavioral Sciences and Board of Healing Arts and neither board felt comfortable with the move. I would hope that this suggestion also be left for more study.

In summary, being a preceptor is a gift to a student and should be acknowledged as such. Mentoring is somewhat like a friendship, sometimes it works well and sometimes, it is just not a good match. I think this best be left to the choice of the AIT, the coordinator and the college involved. And I would encourage you to delay action on this measure and allow the BACHA board to work out more meaningful solutions to the problems voiced in this bill. I sincerely thank you for allowing me to share my concerns with you.

Lou A. Esplund, Chair
Board of Adult Care Home Administrators