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**HOUSE TESTIMONY
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
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SB 443

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of SB 443. I am Phyllis Gilmore the Executive Director of the Kansas Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board (BSRB).

The BSRB is the licensing board for most of the state's mental health professionals, the doctoral level psychologists, the master level psychologists, the clinical psychotherapists, the bachelor, master and clinical level social workers, the master and clinical level professional counselors, and the master and clinical level marriage and family therapists. Additionally, some of the drug and alcohol counselors are registered with the board, although most of them are certified with SRS at the present time.

SB 443 relates to several areas of disciplinary authority of the board. The conditioning of a license, assessing the costs of disciplinary action to the unsuccessful party and requesting an injunction, restraining order, or other such order from a court are areas of authority currently held by some of our professions, but not all. The ability to assess a fine of up to \$1,000 per violation, to issue a cease and desist order and to revoke a license after it has been voluntarily surrendered would be new areas of authority to the BSRB and all of its professions. However, other Kansas licensure boards hold these powers.

One area where the BSRB has made great progress in recent years is in the timeliness of disciplinary action. A backlog no longer exists. Four years ago when I came to the BSRB there was a backlog of over 100 cases. Today we have 26 active cases. We have a very diligent investigator and through his leadership, the board has instituted a new complaint review committee process that has enhanced efficiency and consistency. SB 443 is one of the outcomes of this committee. It is brought forth with the unanimous recommendation of the entire board and will help to continue the positive direction of our improved disciplinary process.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this afternoon. I will be happy to stand for questions.