



To: Rep. Brenda Landwehr and Members of the Special Committee on Medicaid Expansion

**From: Kevin Walker, Vice President of Public Policy and Advocacy
Overland Park Chamber of Commerce**

Date: 6 November 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of Medicaid expansion on behalf of the more than 800 business members of the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce.

The health care costs of low income uninsured individuals are currently being passed on to businesses and others in the system. As part of a comprehensive and thorough review, the Chamber supports Kansas solutions that improve the quality and efficiency of the current KanCare/Medicaid system while maximizing coverage to those newly eligible under the federal Affordable Care Act.

Expansion of KanCare eligibility will not only help as many as 150,000 working but uninsured Kansans gain access to affordable health care, it can also provide a boost to our state's economy because of a healthier and more efficient workforce and by creating as many as 3,500 – 4,000 new jobs over the next five years (according to a study by George Washington University), while reducing our overall state spending on health care and alleviating the strain of the increasing cost of uncompensated care that hospitals and other providers are straining to absorb as well as increasingly higher health insurance premiums being passed on to businesses and individuals as a result of those costs.

According to an analysis by Manatt Health Solutions, many of the dollars currently spent by the state in providing required health care services to the uninsured would be reimbursed by federal funds, including as much as \$75 million per year spent on mental and behavioral health care; \$29 million spent annually to reimburse hospitals and

clinics for uncompensated care they provide; and \$9 million spent annually to provide medical services to prison inmates.

Further, a thoughtful, well-designed Kansas-specific program to expand KanCare in could ultimately generate more than \$126 million in savings and new revenue, more than offsetting the predicted cost of approximately \$57.5 million, thus netting the state over \$69 million.

For the reasons stated above, the Chamber respectfully requests that you support the creation and adoption of Medicaid expansion plan. Thank you for your consideration.