

MINUTES OF THE SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Richard Hilderbrand at 8:30 am on Thursday, March 10, 2022, in room 142-S of the Capitol.

All members were present

Committee staff present:

Connor Stangler, Legislative Research Department
Donola Fairbanks, Committee Assistant
Eileen Ma, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Jenna Moyer, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Sam Adolphson, Visiting Fellow Opportunity Solutions Project
Sarah Fertig, Medicaid Director
John Wilson, President, Kansas Action for Children
Karen Siebert, Public Policy & Advocacy Advisory, Harvesters - The Community Food Network, the Kansas Food Bank and Second Harvest Community Food Bank
Rabbi Moti Rieber, Kansas Interfaith Action
Haley Kottler, Campaign Director, Kansas Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
Gail Cozadd, CEO, Kansas Children's Service League
Megan Word, Government Relations Director, American Cancer Society - Cancer Action Network
Sean Gatewood, KanCare Advocates Network
Sandra Kimmons, Director of Economic and Employment Services, Kansas Department for Children and Families
Tara Mays, Vice President, State Legislative Relations, Kansas Hospital Association
Lindsie Ford, JD, Public Policy Attorney, Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence

Others in attendance:

No list available

Hearing on: SB501 — Requiring able-bodied adults without dependents to complete an employment and training program in order to receive food assistance, requiring state agencies to conduct cross-checks to verify public assistance recipient eligibility and to receive public assistance, requiring the department for health and environment seek approval to eliminate mandatory hospital presumptive eligibility, requiring hospitals to follow standards established for presumptive eligibility determinations and requiring state agencies to make data from fraud investigations into food assistance and medical assistance publicly available on such agencies' websites.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES of the Committee on Public Health and Welfare at 8:30 am on Thursday, March 10, 2022, in room 142-S of the Capitol.

Chairperson Hilderbrand opened the hearing on **SB501**.

Jenna Moyer, Staff Revisor gave an overview of the bill

Sam Adolphson gave proponent testimony. He stated that **SB501** will help tens of thousands of Kansas workers on welfare to get connected with jobs and their communities. This will be good for Kansas's economy and taxpayers but the primary benefit is for the workers themselves who can build self-sufficient lives, independent from government dependency. ([Attachment 1](#))

Written only, proponent testimony was submitted by:

Steven Anderson, Medicaid Inspector General ([Attachment 2](#))

Sarah Fertig gave neutral testimony but said Kansas Department of Health and Environment has concerns about the cost and feasibility of certain provisions such as new requirements for the Medicaid program related to presumptive eligibility, penalty periods, and data sharing and verification. ([Attachment 3](#))

Testifying as an opponent, John Wilson, said **SB501** contains numerous provision that he strongly opposes:

- Creates new reporting and verification processes that would require rapid and extensive bureaucratic expansion for state agencies.
- Requires multiple state agencies to create new technology systems, practices and staff position that will increase costs to the state.
- Enacts new mandates for those Kansans who are facing temporary financial hardship and are trying to get back on their feet and back on the path to self-sufficiency.

He said voting in favor of **SB501** is voting in favor of an unnecessary and expensive expansion of government bureaucracy and inefficiency, which wastes public resources. ([Attachment 4](#))

Karen Siebert gave opponent testimony. She stated that **SB501** makes it more difficult for Kansas families to receive both food and healthcare assistance. Her testimony focused on who is not helped by the passage of **SB501** including Kansas taxpayers; people who want to curtail the growth of state government; state workers; food insecure families; grocers and food pantries. ([Attachment 5](#))

Rabbi Moti Rieber testified as an opponent of **SB501** saying his argument is threefold - (1), **SB501** is an attack on the dignity of Kansas' most vulnerable citizens. Forcing people off of assistance through burdensome requirements is not the same thing as alleviating poverty; (2), **SB501** is a big government solution, asking underfunded state agencies to spend their limited resources on redundant cross-

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checking measures, and (3), **SB501** will have a negative impact on the charitable section, including food pantries run by churches and other places of worship in rural and urban communities across Kansas. ([Attachment 6](#))

Haley Kottler spoke against **SB501** by saying that the bill undermines basic Kansas values of fairness and subjects low-income Kansans to intrusive burdens that would dramatically increase government bureaucracy in order to make things harder for struggling people. ([Attachment 7](#))

Gail Cozadd gave opponent testimony. She asked that **SB501** be opposed as it creates burdensome legislation for children and families in Kansas who directly benefit from the food assistance program, as well as increases government spending to provide the necessary oversight required by the bill provisions. ([Attachment 8](#))

Sandra Kimmons testified in opposition of **SB501** stating that previous experience with policies that changed eligibility rules for public assistance have generated additional costs to administer programs. The proposed changes in **SB501** include exemptions from the work requirements program; able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) participation in employment and training programs; reporting changes for food assistance; reporting of lottery winnings; reporting verification; coordination with law enforcement regarding electronic benefits transfer (EBT) transactions and data matching coordination with KDHE. ([Attachment 9](#))

Tara May, in her opposition testimony, asked that if **SB501** is passed for assurances that the hospitals can continue to use contracted vendors for the processing of the requirements set out in **SB501** and also requests clarity on which hospital staff would actually need to receive additional training should the punitive actions outlined in the bill ever need to be taken. ([Attachment 10](#))

Lindsie Ford testified in her opponent testimony that **SB501** would be overly burdensome to survivors of domestic and sexual violence who rely on public benefits as a tool to establish a safe and healthy future. Enacting measures that make it more difficult to leave abusive partners does not benefit survivors or Kansans any way. ([Attachment 11](#))

Due to time constraints, Chairperson Hilderbrand left to attend another meeting and Senator Erickson was asked to chair the meeting at this time.

Sean Gatewood stated in his opponent testimony that **SB501** is punitive, inefficient, burdensome and unnecessary. He said it is simply bad policy and asked that the committee vote no on **SB501**. ([Attachment 12](#))

Megan Word gave opposition testimony to **SB501**. She stated that **SB501** creates barriers to affordable, comprehensive health care coverage for uninsured/under-insured Kansans and encouraged lawmakers

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to oppose **SB501**. ([Attachment 13](#))

Committee members posed questions to conferees.

Written only opponent testimony was submitted by:

Liz Long, Policy Analyst, KCDD ([Attachment 14](#))

Alison Troutwine, Private Citizen ([Attachment 15](#))

David Herdman, Private Citizen ([Attachment 16](#))

Kevin Strathman, Private Citizen ([Attachment 17](#))

Diane Smith, Private Citizen ([Attachment 18](#))

Lauren Tice Miller, KNEA ([Attachment 19](#))

Carolyn Garwood, Deacon, St. Paul's Episcopal Church ([Attachment 20](#))

W. Fred Washington, Private Citizen ([Attachment 21](#))

Deborah Dawkins, Executive. Director, East Topeka Seniors ([Attachment 22](#))

David Williams, Private Citizen ([Attachment 23](#))

Carrie McAtee, Member, BOD, Harvester Community Food Network ([Attachment 24](#))

Stuart Little, Kansas Food & Farm Coalition ([Attachment 25](#))

Jennifer Adhima, Ex. Dir., KS Head Start Association ([Attachment 26](#))

Kari Rinker, American Heart Association ([Attachment 27](#))

Tanya Dorf Brunner, Oral Health Ks written only ([Attachment 28](#))

Linda Wyman, Private Citizen written only ([Attachment 29](#))

Lynn Frazier, Member, BOD, Westside Good Neighbor Center ([Attachment 30](#))

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Abbey Gleichenhaus, HumanKind Ministries ([Attachment 31](#))

Cindy Harold, Wallace County Ministerial Alliance Food Pantry ([Attachment 32](#))

Gayona McDonald, Genesis-Thomas County Inc. ([Attachment 33](#))

Gene Winkler, Marion County Food Bank ([Attachment 34](#))

Georgia Masterson, HumanityHouse Foundation ([Attachment 35](#))

Karen A. Springer, Reach Out Food Pantry, Prescott, KS ([Attachment 36](#))

Laura Jordan, Park City Pride Food Pantry ([Attachment 37](#))

Nancy Bansemer, Project Hope, Hugoton, KS ([Attachment 38](#))

Nancy Johnson, Fredonia Food Bank ([Attachment 39](#))

Renee Michaud, St. Joseph Food Pantry & Diaper Closet ([Attachment 40](#))

Susan Moellinger, Passageways, Wichita KS ([Attachment 41](#))

William McReynolds, Udall Food Bank ([Attachment 42](#))

Mary Jane Hoffer, Lecompton United Methodist Church Food Pantry ([Attachment 43](#))

Senator Erickson closed the hearing on **SB501**.

Senator Erickson adjourned the meeting at 10:15 a.m. The next scheduled meeting is March 15, 2022.