

To: Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

From: Wendi Stark, Research Associate

Date: March 25, 2021

RE: Proponent Testimony on HB 2224 – Written Only

I want to thank Chairman Hilderbrand and the members of the Committee for giving the League of Kansas Municipalities the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2224.

HB 2224 would modify current law to expand the definition of infectious disease. The change redefines infectious disease as used in the statutory framework to include all diseases designated as infectious or contagious by the Secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Currently, AIDS, HIV, and hepatitis B are the only infectious diseases that trigger the court's ability to require testing of the person arrested. This change in definition broadens that scope, allowing the court to order testing for other dangerous diseases that have been designated by the Department of Health and Environment.

The League supports expanding this definition as a measure to help protect law enforcement officers serving communities across the state. By nature of their position, officers are at times subjected to increased risk of exposure to disease. By broadening the scope of what tests can be ordered, officers will be better informed about potential hazards, allowing for more rapid testing and treatment of the officer if they were to be exposed to an individual who tests positive for a designated infectious disease.

We welcome the update to this definition to allow for greater protection to those exposed to infectious diseases not previously listed in statute and respectfully ask this Committee to recommend HB 2224 favorably for passage.