



Written proponent testimony on

HB 2578

Programs and treatments by CCBHCs

By

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In

Senate Public Health and Welfare

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Madam Chair and members of the committee,

KASB appears today as a proponent of HB 2578 with a suggestion for an amendment.

Our position is based on our member-affirmed legislative platform, which calls for: *increased support for the mental health needs of students and staff; improved collaboration across agencies and with the Legislature to support educational outcomes for students in foster care or experiencing homeless, and efforts to address other identified student health and safety issues.*

Kansas public schools have been grappling with the crippling impacts of student mental health challenges for several years. Those challenges were exacerbated by the COVID pandemic and its multiple stresses on the families we partner with. School guidance counselors, school social workers, school psychiatrists, and other school staff do their best to offer children the mental health services they so desperately need. The needs are so great, however, that school districts and families often also establish partnerships with non-school-based mental and behavioral health providers that are not currently designated as CCBHCs. That designation is critical because it carries with it the ability to bill Medicaid for behavioral health services, resulting in decreased costs for patients and their families.

Kansas Association of School Boards

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We support HB 2578 broadening the CCBHC designation to include entities other than Community Mental Health Centers. The CMHCs are important and valuable partners with school districts, but we feel the need is too great to limit the provider pool to CMHCs.

KASB respectfully suggests amending the bill to allow the CCBHC designation to be extended to non-CMCHs as of July 1, 2024, rather than 2027.

Thank you.