The Kansas Experience

Kansas lost an icon recently - Rev. Dr. Jesse Milan. Jesse was a force during his lifetime. He was the first African-American to teach in the Lawrence school district after the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in the Brown vs the Topeka Board of Education case. His long career in education also included that of Assistant Professor at Baker University in Baldwin City.

Jesse and his wife Alversa joined the KABC board of directors many years ago. They brought such a fresh perspective to our advocacy work, and were just delightful to get to know. They cared deeply about the injustices that so many aging Kansans suffered while living in long-term care facilities and wanted to do what they could to help gain protections for residents. Alversa was especially appalled, having experienced poor care for her mother in a facility.

Our sympathy goes out to the Milan’s families, as well as our thanks for all that Jesse stood for.

Learn more about Rev. Milan’s life and career [here](#).

Advocacy In Action

On February 3, KABC testified before the House Judiciary Committee in opposition to HB 2126, which, as originally written, would have largely restored immunity for nursing facilities and ALF type facilities even for negligent acts causing injury or harm to residents during COVID. We followed this with an email to all House and Senate Judiciary committee members. The bill was later amended and passed out of committee, and is expected to move on to the Senate.

On February 18th, The House passed HB2114/Senior Care Task Force, as amended. KABC was neutral on the bill urging parity of consumers with providers and parity of issues between institutional care and home and community based care. The bill was amended to include two more consumer members, including the Alzheimer’s Association, which KABC sought.

KABC also testified in support of adequate resources for the survey and certification commission of KDADS, in order to help restore a safer frequency and interval between surveys in nursing facilities and assisted living type facilities, before the Senate Ways and Means Subcommittee on Health, the House Social Services Budget Committee and the KanCare Oversight Committee.

We provided written neutral testimony, on HB 2249, concerning protected personal income (PPI) and indexing the PPI to social security raises for HCBS and PACE recipients. The PPI in the bill is only 150% of poverty vs. 300%, or the full amount federal regulations allow which KABC advocates. The bill was heard in the House Social Services Budget Committee.

Finally, KABC continues to urge passage of HB 2004, Charlie’s Bill, Appeal Rights for Assisted Living Facility Residents. We had expected the bill to have been worked in House Children and Seniors Committee. Turnaround

Upcoming Events

KABC hosts free trainings year round. If you’re interested in KABC presenting to your group, email clairea@kabc.org or call the office.

Kansas Ombudsman News

The Kansas Senate approved the appointment of Camille Russell as state Long-Term Care Ombudsman. She will oversee eight regional ombudsmen working with nursing homes and ALFs advocating for residents.

Better Care On A Budget

Make the change in elder care you want to see - without breaking the bank! KABC’s monthly giving program, Circle of Care, allows you to choose your own membership dues. You’re in control and can change the amount or cancel anytime. Just tell us how much you’d like to give each month. It’s that simple! Plus when you [join Circle of Care](#) you get an exclusive monthly update that shares exactly how your gift was used that month to better care.

Support KABC At No Cost!

**Dillons/Kroger**

Before you shop at Dillons for all your St. Patrick’s Day food and beverages, be sure to [designate KABC as your Community Rewards Charity](#) to improve elder care as you shop.
Day is next Monday and bills that have not passed out of Committee must be "blessed" in order to stay alive this session. KABC has asked for the bill to be "blessed". We understand that some amendments be proposed if the bill survives after Turnaround Day.

KABC thanks all of you who responded to calls for action to contact legislators to support KABC’s position on these bills.

Resources

March is

National Nutrition Month
Nutrition and health go hand-in-hand. How and what you eat can help or hinder your well-being, your overall strength and mental capacity. Making wise food choices should be fun and easy to do. Did you know that KABC has a great collection of healthy recipes for all ages online? Check our website for easy to prepare and tasty choices. Here’s to your health!

Multiple Sclerosis Education & Awareness Month
Multiple sclerosis (MS) is an unpredictable disease of the central nervous system that disrupts the flow of information within the brain, and between the brain and body. The cause of MS is still unknown. Scientists believe that a combination of environmental and genetic factors contribute to the risk of developing MS. The National MS Society can help you understand more about this disease.

March 31 Deadline for Enrolling in Medicare or Changing Medicare Advantage Enrollment
Advocates working with clients eligible for or enrolled in Medicare should be aware of two important opportunities with a March 31 deadline—the Medicare General Enrollment Period for people who need to enroll in Medicare Part A or B, and the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period, for people in Medicare Advantage plans who want to change their coverage. Both periods run January 1 - March 31. Learn more here.

COVID-19 Resources
KABC gets frequent calls from family members who have a loved-one in a long-term care facility, asking about compassionate care visits. CMS and the Kansas Dept. for Aging & Disability Services (KDADS) has issued visitation guidance that also addresses this concern.

What can you do if the facility denies you compassionate care visits? If the facility tells you that you cannot have compassionate care visits, there are a number of steps you can take:

- Ask for the reason. CMS guidance states that facilities may not restrict visitation without a reasonable clinical or safety cause. Check any visitation guidance or directives about compassionate care visits that your state has issued.
- Request a care planning meeting and emphasize your loved one’s need for these visits.
- Involve your long-term care ombudsman. The Ombudsman program advocates for residents and can help resolve concerns. Not only can your ombudsman help you and your loved one advocate for their rights, but they can help you work with your facility to identify the need for compassionate care.
- File a complaint with your state survey agency. This agency is responsible for regulating and overseeing nursing homes in your state. One of its duties is to investigate complaints.

Read the National Consumer Voice fact sheet, Making the Case for Compassionate Care Visits for more information.

Amazon Smile
Amazon donates a percentage of each item purchased through their website to a charity of your choice. Before you click that “Buy Now” button, designate KABC as your Amazon Smile charity and better elder care with every purchase! Here’s how.

Your donations help strengthen our advocacy work to assure aging adults and Kansans with disabilities always have quality long-term care.

Thank you!
About Kansas Advocates for Better Care
KABC is a charitable 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to improve long-term care for older adults in Kansas. Our mission is achieved through public policy advocacy, trainings and education, and by providing guidance & support to older adults and their families who need help with long-term care issues.