Special Committee on Nursing Facility Reimbursement Rate Methodology

Dan Goodman, Executive Director of Kansas Advocates for Better Care. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today.

By 2030 more than 20% of Kansans will be 65 years of age or older, this coupled with the understanding that more than a third of adult care facilities don’t have adequate staff to meet needs now. Should highlight the importance of this discussion.

I first want to compliment the legislature for actions taken over the last three sessions, we believe this body has been incredibly generous with the industry. With that, we also believe it’s time for comprehensive reform and this committee has an opportunity to set the stage for funding a better approach to meeting the needs of Kansans.

We recommend that reform and changes in reimbursement rates be guided by the following:

1) An approach requiring demonstrated outcomes in order to achieve higher reimbursement rates as this would increase the likelihood of improvement in quality of care. Past budget enhancements provided to the industry over recent sessions have not improved staffing levels in these facilities. A recent study ranks Kansas 46th in the nation for facilities with staff shortages.

2) Any reform should include a long-term investment in community-based service options as well as institutional care. Diversification in Kansas long-term care funding is a wise investment strategy for Kansas. Data strongly suggests that our current approach to long-term care drives older Kansans prematurely into facilities. Kansas ranks 47th in the nation for low-care nursing facility residents. These low-care residents could be served in the communities longer. We can delay or divert individuals from ever needing the higher cost institutional care.

3) Restoring safety net supports such as, case management to compliment the KanCare Frail Elderly waiver. This investment would strengthen our system, Case management would greatly improve support to older Kansans and their families in managing in-home care needs and navigating community-based supports. Again, to reduce the likelihood of institutional care.

In closing, I urge the committee to consider our recommendations. A more balanced approach for long-term care and a reimbursement system that rewards demonstrated results would bring about better care results and a more cost-effective system for all Kansans.

Thank you, I will stand for questions.