

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

REGARDING VETO OF HOUSE BILL 2044

I have long maintained three criteria for evaluating Medicaid expansion under Obamacare. Any attempt to expand this entitlement program should include a plan to eliminate the inherited waiting list for services to our disabled community, include work requirements to help Kansans escape poverty, and have a neutral impact on the state budget. This bill does not meet those requirements. Additionally, I am disappointed this bill will lead to an increase in funding for Planned Parenthood.

The most effective welfare program is one that helps people find a good paying job, escape poverty, and gain economic security. This bill's work component is nothing more than a work referral program, which will not lead to real employment gains for low income families. A true work requirement, as currently exists in the TANF and SNAP programs, would encourage and assist low-income able-bodied Kansans in receiving the educational and employment opportunities they deserve. We cannot help our citizens build better lives without also incentivizing them to find a permanent path out of poverty.

Prior administrations created and expanded waitlists for Kansans with disabilities. Over the course of my administration, I have worked to reduce the disability waitlist for these services. Yet, instead of continuing this critical work, HB 2044 prioritizes service for able-bodied adults without dependents instead of members of the disability community who need services now.

The cost of expanding Medicaid under ObamaCare is irresponsible and unsustainable. A recent third party study from Aon Hewitt estimates that expansion will cost Kansas taxpayers over \$1.2 billion from the state general fund over the coming years. In fact, states that have expanded have seen cost overruns of 110 percent or more than double the projection of enrollees. This bill is not budget neutral, instead placing a burden on the budget of unrestrainable costs.

Furthermore, this legislation ensures a significant increase in state and federal Medicaid dollars funneled towards abortion providers like Planned Parenthood. Kansas is a pro-life state, respecting the value and dignity of each unique human life. Our citizens do not want their tax dollars supporting organizations that are antithetical to human dignity. We cannot and will not support this legislation that continues to fund organizations that undermine a culture of life.

Finally, it is unwise to undertake such a drastic change to our Medicaid system in Kansas while our partners in Washington D.C. continue working to overhaul the Affordable Care Act. Congressional actions indicate there are many changes to Medicaid on the horizon. Despite lack of Congressional action last week, The White House and House Leadership have restarted negotiations on legislation to repeal the Affordable Care Act. These changes may impact many aspects of the Kansas Medicaid program, and attempting to overhaul our current system while these changes are still being worked out is potentially harmful to our state.

Accordingly, pursuant to Article 2, Section 14(a) of the Constitution of the State of Kansas, I hereby veto House Bill 2044.

Dated: March 30, 2017

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sam Brownback". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Sam Brownback

Governor of Kansas