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Testimony re: Organization of Public Health Boards
Special Committee on Organization of Public Health Boards
Presented by Ronald R. Hein
on behalf of
Kansas Association of Nurse Anesthetists
December 14, 2016

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

My name is Ron Hein, and I am legislative counsel for the Kansas Association of Nurse Anesthetists (KANA). KANA is the state professional association for Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists, who, despite their name, are licensed by the state of Kansas to provide anesthesia care in hospitals and other healthcare facilities in both urban and rural areas of the state.

KANA opposes the creation of a super-board for healthcare licensees in the state, and would urge the committee not to recommend legislation either creating the super-board or combining the Board of Nursing and the Board of Healing Arts as an initial step in accomplishing the creation of a super-board.

Our opposition is not a parochial protectionism for our existing board, but is based upon strong arguments against the creation of such super-board. First of all, the fee agencies which would be combined or have functions combined within a health super-board do NOT involve any state general fund dollars, and, thus, involve no taxpayer dollars. Funding for all health fee agencies are paid by the licensees themselves, and fees are only charged for specific activities of the boards performed in the regulatory function for such licensees.

Years ago, when I served in the State Senate, I served on the Ways and Means Committee, and had the opportunity to chair the subcommittee handling the budgets of the fee agencies. I became aware that the regulated licensees of such fee boards are very vigilant about the budgets of such boards, and thus the regulated licensees, who pay the fees, provide the necessary oversight of the fees of the licensing boards so as to insure that efficiency exists. If the boards are not efficient, the regulated licensees insure that the board is efficient so that license fees remain reasonable. There is no need for the legislature to impose a super-board to try to impose efficiency.

In my many years around the legislature, I have never yet seen the creation of a new bureaucracy create efficiencies for the state of Kansas, and the creation of a new super-board, while retaining the standing boards, will most assuredly NOT create new efficiencies for the regulated licensees.

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You heard on December 6 about the efficiencies of the Board of Nursing, which regulates CRNAs, and combining the Board of Nursing with the Board of Healing Arts will certainly not provide new efficiencies. In addition, replacing the knowledgeable staff of either of the boards, or any of the health regulatory boards, with jack of all trades and master of none employees of a super-board will, by necessity, create less efficiency, less expertise, and less effectiveness in the processing of licenses or performing of other regulatory functions by this new proposal.

We urge the committee to recognize that efficiencies already exist through the current provision for regulatory boards accountable to their own regulated licenses, and to disapprove the introduction of any legislation creating a health super-board or legislation combining the Board of Nursing and the Board of Healing Arts in a first step towards such a concept.

Thank you for permitting me to submit this written testimony.