



JOHNSON COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING **2022 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM**

The Johnson County Commission on Aging Supports the following:

Executive Committee

Pam Shernuk, Chair
Paula Hurt, Vice Chair
John P. Smith
Kim Mann
Andrea Leavitt

Members

Cynthia Schendel
Dale Warman
Rob Givens
Robert Cantu
Carol Feaker
Cindy Green
Chris Talarico
Jarrod Ousley

Board of County

Commissioners Liaison

Commissioner
Shirley Allenbrand

Area Agency on Aging

Jay Leak, Deputy Director

Area Agency on Aging

11811 South Sunset Drive
Suite 1300
Olathe, KS 66061-7056
913-715-8860/ Phone
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- 1. Full funding of the Senior Care Act (SCA) for Area Agencies on Aging.** These services are essential to keep the aging population out of the Medicaid Nursing Home Program and are cost effective for the state and federal funding sources that support the frail and elderly population.
- 2. Medicaid expansion through KanCare in Kansas.** The County is required to have a public health department and provide mental health services and the decision to limit Medicaid expansion has an impact on the citizens of Johnson County. Absent the state's participation in Medicaid expansion, county taxpayers are required to pay for these services that would otherwise be covered by Medicaid. Through local tax revenue, Johnson County provides charitable care for mental health services and uncompensated care for emergency medical care through Medical Action (MED-ACT) that could be significantly reduced by Medicaid expansion.
- 3. The evaluation of the success of HCBS waiver programs within KanCare to determine if the KanCare program is well suited for continued oversight of HCBS waiver programs.** No integration of HCBS waivers should be considered at least until all HCBS waiver programs have stabilized and quality concerns are sufficiently addressed, regardless of whether the HCBS waivers reside in or out of the KanCare program.
- 4. The gradual, incremental reduction in state sales tax on food and pharmaceuticals.**
- 5. Expanding the eligibility of the Homestead Act and SAFESR – Kansas Property Tax Relief for Low Income Seniors to provide property tax relief for those on fixed incomes.**
- 6. Financial Security-Work and Save.** As pensions through one's place of employment have become less available, and 401K savings programs are often not provided at workplaces, savings for retirement have plummeted. About 42 percent of Kansas's private sector employees – roughly 423,000 individuals work for an employer that does not offer a retirement plan. A Workplace Retirement savings program would allow workers to save money directly from their paychecks and take that savings with them when they change jobs. The structure of this program would be similar to the Kansas 529 college savings plan. An adequate savings program would improve the quality of life for the aged population.



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- 7. Access to Broadband.** The pandemic of 2020 has highlighted the need for accessible, affordable, high-speed Internet. Ensuring broadband access, affordability and training is essential to older adults in both rural and urban areas. The Internet provides accessibility to telehealth opportunities now offered by most health care providers and also provides socialization opportunities with friends and family members that might not otherwise be available. Access to reliable broadband enables seniors to benefit from technologies that improve their quality of life and helps them to age in place.

Approved by the Johnson County COA Board September 8, 2021

