Testimony before the

House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development

on

HB 2059 – Workers compensation; relating to medical guides for the determination of permanent impairment

by

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January 31, 2017

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

The Kansas Association of School Boards Workers Compensation Fund thanks the committee for the opportunity to express its opposition to HB 2059 which proposes reinstatement of the AMA Guides to Permanent Disability, 4th Edition, rather than continue with use of the 6th Edition.

As a provider of workers compensation insurance to 110 K-12 public education entities and community/technical colleges, the KASB Fund believes the developments in medical treatment and rehabilitation since publication of the 4th Edition justify the update in evaluation of disabilities in the context of work related injuries. Reliance on a 1993 publication when all aspects of medical care and rehabilitative medicine have advanced is counter-intuitive.

Having handled in excess of 500 claims since the legislative change to the 6th Edition, the KASB Workers Compensation Fund believes the newer version provides more consistency in claims handling, and still protects the injured workers with a fair level of compensation for any permanent disability they have sustained. Experience has shown that some injuries receive less based on 6th Edition than similar injuries would have provided under the 4th Edition, but other categories generate higher levels of compensation.

The KASB Workers Compensation Fund requests no action be taken to advance HB 2059.