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Healthy People Build Strong Communities

Public Comments by Dennis Kriesel with the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments (KALHD) to the

House Committee on Social Services Budget

Kansas Department of Health and Environment Budget • February 7, 2023

Chairman Mason and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today regarding the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's (KDHE's) budget. My name is Dennis Kriesel, and I am the Executive Director of the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments (KALHD). KALHD is a nonprofit association dedicated to strengthening local health departments for the purpose of improving and protecting the health of all Kansans.

KALHD is requesting the committee consider adding \$1.4 million, all via the State General Fund, in FY 2024 to Aid to Local Health Departments for statutory formula distribution as listed under KDHE's Division of Public Health (the state financial assistance defined in K.S.A. 65-241 through K.S.A. 65-246). The Governor's budget allocates \$4 million for such Aid to Local Health Departments in FY 2024. This enhancement would raise the total allocation to \$5.4 million.

Thanks to the support of this committee, this statutory formula aid (commonly referred to as the State Formula) did receive increases the last two state fiscal years (\$1 million for FY 2022 and \$800 thousand for FY 2023), and thus we are here today requesting \$1.4 million to finish catching the formula up for inflation and population increases since 1992¹.

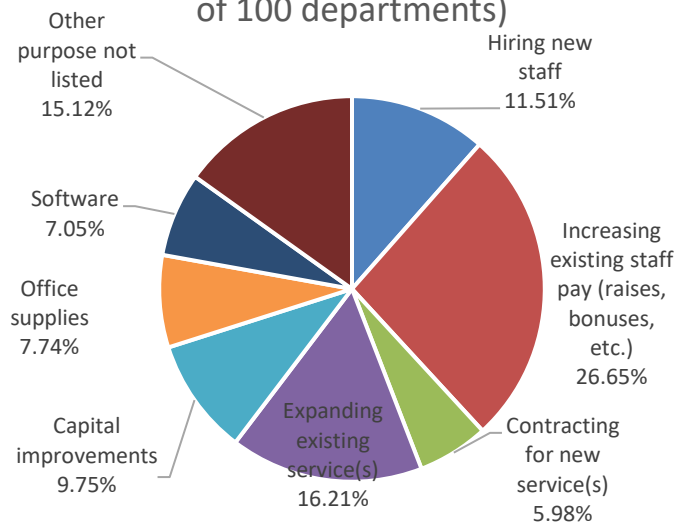
KALHD is also requesting a budget proviso setting the minimum payment under K.S.A. 65-242 at \$12,000 rather than the \$7,000 currently in statute. The legislature has supported this proviso for the last three state fiscal years and this would continue to adjust this minimum value for inflation since 1992 while we work to get the statute revised.

This State Formula funding is discretionary in its use, meaning local health departments can use it to help with a host of important public health functions including disease investigation and control, school inspections, immunizations, enforcement of nuisance laws, and environmental health functions. But the work of local health departments goes much further. Local health departments serve as the chief health strategists for their communities, providing services identified as community needs (such as senior services, home visitation, car seat safety, and many more) and functioning to educate local populations about health issues and providing key emergency preparedness functions and readiness.

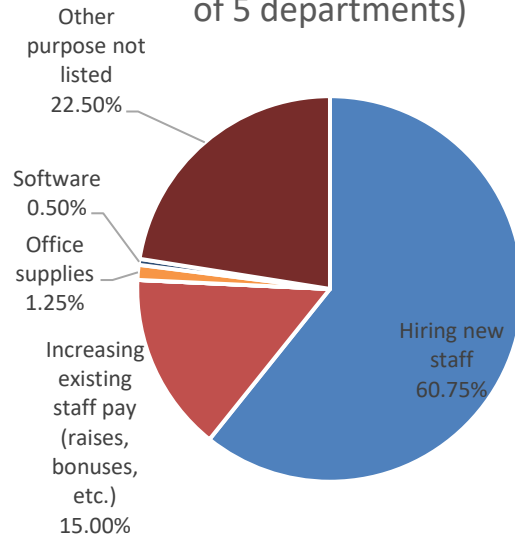
In December 2022-January 2023 KALHD conducted a survey of the 100 local health departments asking them what they would do with an additional 35% in State Formula funding (as our \$1.4 million increase request is a 35% increase to the overall funding's total). Here are some graphs showing both the overall categorical breakdown of planned uses for the increase, along with charts further broken down into small, medium, and large population health departments.

¹ The 1992 allocation (\$2.2 million) factored against the population (2.532 million as of July 1992) results in a per capita value of \$0.87. BLS CPI inflation calculator of that value from January 1992 to May 2022 increases per capita value to \$1.84. Multiplied by the Kansas 2021 population (certified July 1, 2022) sets the inflation- and population-adjusted State Formula at \$5.4 million.

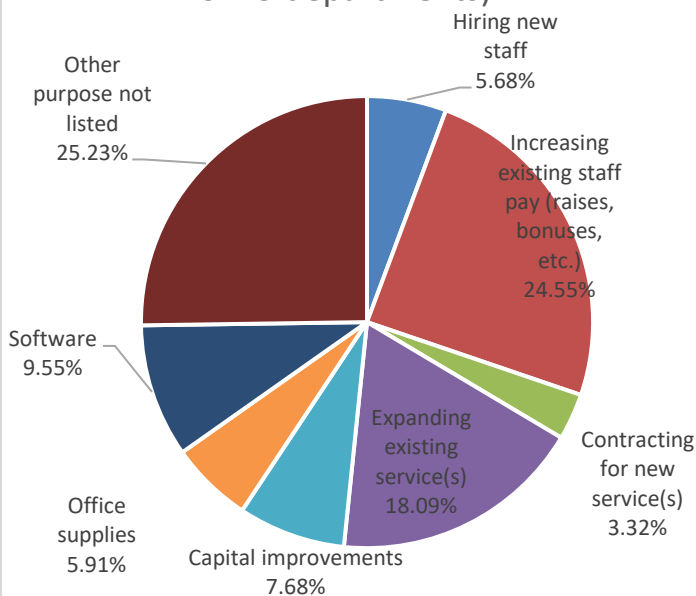
**Overall: Local Health Department
Planned Use for Increased State
Formula (85% response rate; 85 out
of 100 departments)**



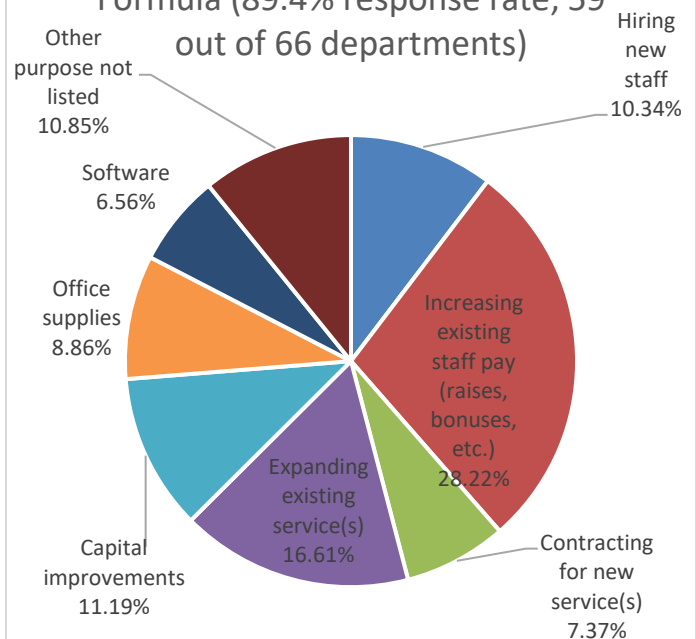
**Large Local Health Departments
Planned Use for Increased State
Formula (80% response rate; 4 out
of 5 departments)**



**Medium Local Health Departments
Planned Use for Increased State
Formula (75.9% response rate; 22 out
of 29 departments)**



**Small Local Health Departments
Planned Use for Increased State
Formula (89.4% response rate; 59
out of 66 departments)**



Thank you for listening and considering this enhancement request to KDHE's Division of Health budget. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Sincerely,

Dennis Kriesel

Executive Director, Kansas Association of Local Health Departments