

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH SERVICES

Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the 2026 Interim

August 18, 2026

Call to Order and Roll Call

The third meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Health Services was held on August 18, 2026, at 1:00 PM ET / 12:00 noon CT in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Stephen Meredith, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Stephen Meredith, Co-Chair; Representative Kimberly Poore Moser, Co-Chair; Senators Julie Raque Adams, Karen Berg, Donald Douglas, Robby Mills, Michael J. Nemes, and Steve Rawlings; and Representatives Steve Bratcher, Josh Bray, Lindsey Burke, Emily Callaway, Adrielle Camuel, Ryan Dotson, Ken Fleming, Deanna Gordon, Kim Holloway, Mary Lou Marzian, Amy Neighbors, Marianne Proctor, Felicia Rabourn, Rebecca Raymer, Steve Riley, Scott Sharp, and Lisa Willner.

Guests: Jennifer Willis, Chief Executive Officer, Pathways Inc.; Joe Dan Beavers, President, Chief Executive Officer, CAYA Collaborative Care; Zil Joyce Dixon Romero, Senior State Government Affairs Manager, National Rural Health Association; Kim Link, Director, Institute for Rural Health (IRH), Associate Professor, School of Nursing, Western Kentucky University (WKU); William Mace Baker, Interim Director, Center of Excellence in Rural Health (CERH), College of Medicine, University of Kentucky (UK); Matthew R. Coleman, Director, Kentucky State Office of Rural Health (KORH), CERH, College of Medicine, UK; Michaela D. Amburgey, Rural Project Manager, CERH, College of Medicine, UK; Matthew Wingate, General Counsel, Cabinet for Economic Development; Chad Zimlich, Deputy General Counsel, Cabinet for Economic Development; Lucy Heskins, Staff Attorney Supervisor, Kentucky Protection and Advocacy; Wesley Duke, General Counsel, Cabinet for Health and Family Services; and Sara Janes, Board Counsel, Board of Ophthalmic Dispensers, Public Protection Cabinet.

LRC Staff: Chris Joffrion, Cameron Franey, and Becky Lancaster.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the July 16, 2026, meeting was made by Senator Douglas, seconded by Representative Bratcher, and approved by a voice vote without objection.

Consideration of Referred Administrative Regulations

The following referred administrative regulations were placed on the agenda for consideration:

- 201 KAR 008:533 Proposed - Licensure of dentists.
 - 201 KAR 008:540 Proposed - Dental practices and prescription writing.
 - 201 KAR 008:550 Proposed - Anesthesia and sedation related to dentistry.
 - 201 KAR 013:010 Proposed - Board; powers, duties, meetings.
 - 201 KAR 013:040 Proposed - Licensing.
 - 201 KAR 013:050 Proposed - Apprentices.
 - 201 KAR 013:055 Proposed - Continuing education requirements.
 - 201 KAR 013:065 Proposed - Complaint Management.
 - 201 KAR 013:071 Proposed - Repeal of 201 KAR 13:070.
 - 201 KAR 013:075 Proposed - Administrative hearings.
 - 201 KAR 020:472 Proposed - Initial approval for dialysis technician training programs.
 - 201 KAR 020:474 Proposed - Continuing approval and periodic evaluation of dialysis technician training programs.
 - 201 KAR 022:010 Proposed - Objectives of physical therapy.
 - 201 KAR 022:070 Proposed - Requirements for foreign-educated physical therapists and physical therapist assistants.
 - 202 KAR 007:801 Proposed - Medical directors.
 - 902 KAR 001:400 Proposed - Administrative conference.
 - 902 KAR 018:011 Proposed - Definitions for 902 KAR Chapter 18.
 - 902 KAR 018:021 Proposed - Eligibility, certification periods, and time frames for processing applicants.
 - 902 KAR 018:031 Proposed - Participant violations.
 - 902 KAR 018:040 Proposed - Fair hearing procedures for participants.
 - 902 KAR 018:050 Proposed - Vendor authorization criteria.
 - 902 KAR 018:061 Proposed - Vendor violations and sanctions.
 - 902 KAR 018:071 Proposed - Participant access determination and civil money penalty.
 - 902 KAR 018:081 Proposed - Local agency fair hearing and vendor administrative review process.
 - 902 KAR 018:090 Proposed - High risk criteria.
- All the above listed administrative regulations were reviewed.

Wesley Duke, General Counsel, Cabinet for Health and Family Services, requested a deferral of the following referred administrative regulations:

907 KAR 002:720 Proposed - 1915(c) Kentucky's Community Health for Improved Lives and Development (CHILD) Waiver Program Requirements; and

907 KAR 002:725 Proposed - 1915(c) Kentucky's Community Health for Improved Lives and Development (CHILD) Waiver Reimbursement.

A motion to defer the regulations was made by Senator Douglas, seconded by Senator Berg, and approved by roll call vote.

Update on Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics

Joe Dan Beavers, President, Chief Executive Officer, CAYA Collaborative Care, discussed the roles of a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC), CCBHC's service coverage areas, varied CCBHC's cost values, and the upcoming release of an independent analysis of CCBHCs.

Jennifer Willis, Chief Executive Officer, Pathways Inc., discussed the national CCBHC model, data collected from the 4 original CCBHCs in Kentucky, and a request for new CCBHC legislation.

In response to Representative Willner, Ms. Willis stated if a state plan amendment regarding CCBHCs is not filed the programs and patient care provided by CCBHCs will end. Mr. Beavers stated that without the continuance of the federal demonstration the state will revert to the reimbursement model based on fee-for-service.

In response to Senator Berg, Ms. Willis discussed what is included in a typical CCBHC encounter and services offered to the client. Mr. Beavers discussed the robust crisis response care team component,

In response to Representative Moser, Mr. Beavers discussed the process and components of adding a state plan amendment regarding CCBHCs to the State Medicaid Plan. Ms. Willis stated adding a CCBHC related amendment would begin with a needs assessment of the community.

The State of Rural Healthcare

A. National Overview from the National Rural Health Association

Zil Joyce Dixon Romero, Senior State Government Affairs Manager, National Rural Health Association, discussed the national rural health challenges for patients and hospitals, primary care health professional shortages in rural areas, policy impacts of the 2025 One Big Beautiful Bill Act, declines in federal Medicaid spending in rural areas,

frequency of eligibility determinations, Medicaid work requirements in other states, projected increase in the uninsured rate, the role of state legislatures in the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP), examples of other states' commitment to RHTP policy, nationwide barriers to access, enacted state models with financing and workforce examples, the Kentucky Health Data Utility Study, and policy areas to address in the 2027 Regular Session.

In response to Chair Meredith, Mr. Romero discussed why he is optimistic about the future of rural health.

B. Update from the Institute for Rural Health (IRH)

Kim Link, Director, IRH, Associate Professor, School of Nursing, WKU, discussed the BRIGHT Coalition Community Health Assessment collaboration and information collected, regional solutions to increase dental care, autism workforce development, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Rural Health Network Development Planning Grant, and the role of the IRH in communities.

In response to Chair Meredith, Ms. Link stated the IRH began 3 years ago at the request of WKU President Timothy C. Caboni, and the BRIGHT Coalition Community Health Assessment information, private practice needs and research, guide the IRH initiative. The IRH is partnering with CAYA Collaborative Care for support in research, and the measure of success is better health outcomes for rural communities.

In response to Representative Moser, Ms. Link stated the area development districts should look into what different regions or universities are working on to minimize program duplications, and Project ECHO will collaborate on a model of education with a care management approach for various case studies.

In response to Representative Marzian, Ms. Link stated the IRH plans to share the video on oral prevention online with local communities, organizations, and in schools. She discussed how IRH will be looking into health providers remaining or leaving rural areas.

Update from the Center of Excellence in Rural Health (CERH)

William Mace Baker, Interim Director, CERH, College of Medicine, UK, discussed the mission of the center, overview of KORH's statewide programs and assistance, academic program graduates, pathway programs for high school students, various grants offering health care training, and support for workers and residents.

Michaela D. Amburgey, Rural Project Manager, CERH, College of Medicine, UK, discussed the key impacts of the Kentucky Homeplace program, and the partnership with WellCare community health workers to serve members with chronic disease.

Matthew R. Coleman, Director, KORH, CERH, College of Medicine, UK, gave an overview of KORH's statewide programs and assistance available, student loan repayment programs, summary of 3 CERH conferences, research initiatives and interventions, and various grants offering healthcare training and support.

In response to Representative Moser, Mr. Coleman stated many various healthcare workers are using the loan forgiveness programs, and stated the designation of a rural health clinic is directed by Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

In response to Representative Burke, Mr. Coleman stated that he would look into the issue of non-compete clauses for healthcare workers.

In response to Senator Douglas, Ms. Amburgey stated statewide certification helps community health workers to be more impactful and trusted. Mr. Baker stated it is difficult to track the progress of healthcare-trained students beyond high school.

In response to Chair Meredith, Mr. Baker stated continued support and funding to expand staff is needed for further growth. Ms. Amburgey stated that having various health workers as a part of the community does impact positive health outcomes.

In response to Representative Marzian, Ms. Amburgey stated UK supports the Kentucky Cancer Program. Mr. Coleman stated the whole blood emergency medical services program supports research for prehospital whole blood transfusions.

Update on the Kentucky Rural Hospital Loan Program (KRHLP)

Matthew Wingate, General Counsel, Cabinet for Economic Development, discussed the 2026 goals of the Cabinet for Economic Development, priority sectors and enablers, the heritage counties benefits and initiatives, grant programs for a federal match of funds, product development initiative successes, economic benefit of rural hospitals, purposes of the KRHLP, loan terms for the funds, and the foundation of compliance for the KRHLP.

In response to Chair Meredith, Mr. Wingate stated the Cabinet for Economic Development is taking incremental steps to approach the inequity of growth in rural areas and is beginning a study relative to understanding advantages in rural areas.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.