

Approved: 2-23-94  
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Marvin Smith at 9:00 a.m. on February 22, 1994 in Room 521-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Walker Hendrix

Committee staff present: Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research Department  
Dennis Hodgins, Legislative Research Department  
Arden Ensley, Revisor of Statutes  
Nancy Kippes, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Clyde Howard  
Joe Douglas, Jr.  
Carolyn L. Campbell  
Rev. Ronald Smith  
Thirkelle Howard for Gilbert R. Parks, M.D.  
Troy Scroggins, Black Democratic Caucus of Kansas  
Alice Brown, Kansas Human Rights Commission  
Sue Ledbetter, National Organization for Women  
Judy Moler, Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women  
Representative Forrest Swall  
Representative Nancy Brown  
Representative Joan Wagnon  
Sharon Stringfellow, Concerned Women for America  
Linda Knola, Registered Nurse

Others attending: See attached list

Hearing on:

HB 2543 - African-American advisory committee, composition, officers' powers and duties.

Clyde Howard provided written testimony in support of HB 2543, stating the partnership between an Advisory Commission on African-American Affairs and the state would reaffirm that those to be served by programs must be actively involved in their design, implementation and evaluation. He recommended amendments to make the organization an advisory commission rather than a committee and to make the commission independent rather than a part of Human Resources (Attachment 1).

Joe Douglas, Jr. testified in support of HB 2543 noting that the Commission would need sufficient autonomy to adequately address the manifold disparities now stifling the growth and development of the African-American Community (Attachment 2).

Bill Minner stated Kansas does have one of the strongest civil rights laws in the country but he said this bill would assist the state and African-Americans in addressing problems peculiar to African-Americans and bring the African-American into the mainstream of this state.

Carolyn Campbell testified in support of HB 2543 and said the commission would be beneficial in addressing the needs of educational opportunities, preventative health care and cultural needs (Attachment 3).

Rev. Ronald Smith spoke in support of HB 2543 because the Commission would be a liaison to the State for African-American affairs.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS, Room 521-S Statehouse, at 9:00 a.m. on February 22, 1994.

Thirkelle Howard appeared to present testimony for Dr. Gilbert Parks, who was unable to attend the meeting (Attachment 4). He read from testimony that this would not be a final solution but would certainly be a step forward and cost efficient means to moving closer to a more just and fair society.

Troy Scroggins, Black Democratic Caucus of Kansas, supports HB 2543 as a way of furthering the political cause of the African-American.

Alice Brown, Kansas Human Rights Commission, appeared in support of HB 2543 as it would make the Commission a central place to go to be heard.

Written testimony was distributed from Cheryl Brown Henderson, President of the Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence and Research (Attachment 5); Meredith Kidd, Associate Dean of Students at Washburn University (Attachment 6); Roy Abbott, Psychologist and Dr. Jean E. White, Ex-Officio, Black Women's Network, Inc. (Attachment 7); and Rhonda Egans, President, Topeka Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (Attachment 8).

Cheryl Brown Henderson will provide the committee with a map of black population within the state of Kansas.

HB 2901 - establishment of Kansas commission on the status of women.

Sue Ledbetter, National Organization for Women, provided written testimony in support of HB 2901 stating 46 states have commissions, 30 of which are state funded (Attachment 9). Some ground has been gained, particularly in the area of economics, however, many women are under-trained, under-educated and not prepared for the challenges of the technical age, and displaced homemakers account for the largest growing percentage of persons living below poverty.

Judy Moler, Topeka Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women, testified that the existence of a statewide commission could make a difference for women and their families across Kansas (Attachment 10).

Representative Forrest Swall testified in support of HB 2901 (Attachment 11) stating that despite action to bring about equal treatment of women in all areas of society and the progress that has been made in several areas, the need for concern regarding women's issues continues. He stated women's issues must be addressed, given the percentage of women in the work force, the increase in poverty of female headed households, and the enormous untapped resource they represent for our society. The creation of a Commission on the Status of Women holds the promise of advancing the quality of life for all Kansans.

Representative Nancy Brown provided written testimony on HB 2901 (Attachment 12) stating our rapidly changing world will have dramatic effects in our society and our state, on business, on families, on health care. She summarized the "average American woman".

Representative Joan Wagnon gave a brief history of the Status of Women. She stated this agency would help focus on the problems of women. She recommended an amendment that would allow the commission to accept grant funds.

Written testimony from Liz Hicks was handed out (Attachment 13).

Sharon Stringfellow, Concerned Women for America, opposes HB 2901 as to how necessary is this commission in view of all the other women's commissions that can provide information to us, and the bill does not focus its attention on the plight and success of all women in their chosen vocations, especially career homemakers, but rather only on paid working women (Attachment 14).

Linda Knola, a registered nurse, testified in opposition to HB 2901 (Attachment 15).

Representative Farmer made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 17, 1994 meeting as submitted. Representative Majure seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for February 23, 1994.

# GUEST LIST

COMMITTEE: House Governmental Organization & Elections DATE: 2-22-94

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	ADDRESS	COMPANY/ORGANIZATION
William V. MINNER	1503 SE. Quincy	CCBC
Clyde Howard	801 NW Harrison Topeka, KS 66604	African-American Community Forum
<del>Birkbeck Howard</del>	2518 SW Ashworth Pl Topeka, KS 66614	"
Rev. Ronald K. Smith	St. Mark's A.M.E. 801 NW Harrison, Topeka, KS 66604	"
Carolyn L. Campbell	3116 S.E. Bryant Topeka, KS 66605	"
Foster Chisholm	233 SE Winfield	
Joe Douglas Jr	1811 Indiana Ave.	Ret.
Eva Pondera	1175 W Topeka Ave. KS Adv. on Hispanic Aff.	
Al Maxwell	4517 SE 25th Terr	
Sue Leebotte	511 Aspen	NOW
Christy Walker	Topeka	KARE
Linda Kola	Topeka	individual
W. L. Q	Topeka	Black Demo Caucus
Troy R. Schwegman	Topeka	City of Topeka
Jacqueline Bree	Topeka	Black Demo. Caucus
Dee Bree	Stanley	self-acting!
Lid Snider	Topeka	KDHR
Sharon Strunkella	Topeka	Concerned Women of America
Robert Bragg	Topeka	CCBC
Carol Bragg Jordan	Topeka	Bragg Foundation
Kenny L. Crowder	Topeka	Black Demo CAUCUS
Alice Brown	"	KS Human Rights Commission
Edward Rowe	EMPORIA	LETTER WOMEN OF VOTERS KS

Statement of the African-American Community Forum  
Presented by Clyde Howard, Member of the Steering Committee  
of the African-American Community Forum  
to the Governmental Organization and Elections Committee  
Kansas House of Representatives

February 22, 1994

Mr. Smith and Members of the Committee:

My name is Clyde Howard. I am a member of the Steering Committee of the African-American Community Forum. Thank you for the opportunity to present our statement.

The African-American Community Forum consists of African-American religious, community, fraternal and civic organizations. It was established in December 1992 to disseminate information on programs and services and to provide mentors and training to help African-Americans prepare for and cope with problems in their work places.

We sincerely urge you to vote for passage of House Bill 2543, with these amendments: (1) That the organization be an "advisory commission", and (2) that it be independent as is the Kansas Human Rights Commission. We firmly believe these amendments will contribute to a viable partnership with state agencies.

Section 5 of HB 2543 proposes timely and critical functions, powers and duties for the Commission, including: advocacy/liaison, information clearinghouse, needs assessment, program design and evaluation, and training and technical assistance. These are but a few of the vital activities an Advisory Commission on African-American Affairs, working with state agencies, can accomplish. This kind of partnership reaffirms an important principle of public policy: those to be served by programs must be actively involved in their design, implementation and evaluation.

We know the problems and challenges. In Kansas, African-Americans are senators, representatives, cabinet secretaries, members of boards and commissions, judges, mayors and county commissioners. Still, few deny this fact: there is no organization in state government committed solely to the advancement of policies and programs that by their design and implementation are sensitive to the needs of African-Americans. That means our voice is seldom heard in the debate over and implementation of public policies and programs. We believe that if this condition continues, public policies and programs, no matter how well-meaning and thoughtfully conceived, or diligently implemented, will be more costly and less effective.

We envision the commission and its staff working cooperatively with the Legislature, Legislative Research, Legislative Post Audit and state agencies to design, monitor and evaluate policies and programs. In time, the committee will be as indispensable to state government as Legislative Research is to the Legislature.

*House Gov't Org + Elections  
February 22, 1994  
Attachment 1*

Several agencies have federal and/or state mandates to intervene effectively to improve African-Americans' access to education, employment, legal, nutrition, social service, prenatal, health and mental health programs. Through conversations with program and services officials of these agencies, readings of some of their annual reports, budgets and federal grant applications, we have been convinced that many of their efforts have not yielded the desired results.

All Kansans pay for the less than acceptable results through increased expenditures from the general fund. We firmly believe agencies want to achieve better results; we know African-Americans want better educational opportunities and social and economic conditions.

An Advisory Commission on African-American Affairs is a practical way to get better results. The committee would reaffirm an important principle of public policy: those to be served by programs must be actively involved in their design, implementation and evaluation. In short, public policy must marshal the talent, energy and ingenuity of those who will be affected by it.

But, having said that, let me hasten to emphasize that we are not advocating for bigger government. Rather, we are advocating for better government.

We are convinced the moral test of good public policy is whether it is cost-effective and promotes the democratic principles of justice and inclusion. The advisory committee is good public policy. It can be a cost-effective way for the State and African-Americans to become partners in the policy making process.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, the African-American community wants to be involved. An Advisory Commission on African-American Affairs is a cost-effective way to do so. We firmly believe a committee will produce benefits far greater than its cost.

We do not need another study! What we need is an organization working in concert with other agencies to make programs more effective and efficient in delivering those programs and services. That organization, we firmly believe, is an Advisory Commission on African-American Affairs.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, your vote for passage of HB 2543 with amendments will signal your intent and commitment to better, more effective and efficient government.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this statement. I will try to answer your questions.

aaac2.94



THE GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS  
COMMITTEE  
KANSAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 22, 1994

Mr. Smith and Members of the Committee:

My name is **Joe Douglas Jr.** I am a native Kansan of 65 years, a registered voter and a concerned African-American. My concerns stem from the general lack of understanding regarding the perilous plight of African-Americans. Additionally, the attitudes and actions by which this society proceeds methodically to erode the political and social gains obtained over time with great difficulty. Remember, these political and societal strides were made in spite of continual organized opposition to their implementation. This struggle has continued every minute of every day. Today is but one point in time along a continuum of African-American struggles, past, present and future.

Therefore, I write you this day in strong support of an African-American Affairs Commission. This body will need sufficient autonomy to adequately address the manifold disparities now stifling the growth and development of the African-American Community in this fair State and Nation. My intent here is not to imply that no gains have been made nor that concerted effort has not been applied to these problems, both politically and socially by dedicated caring politicians and citizens. The fact remains that progress has been minimal and that damage control sees these problems as life threatening, but not yet beyond repair.

HOUSE BILL No. 2543, with amendments (1) changing the Committee to a Commission and (2) making it independent as is the Kansas Human Rights Commission will send a strong message that you are sincere in your legislative efforts to address these complex issues through inclusion and a full working partnership. There is no doubt that the Kansas Human Rights Commission would not have enjoyed nearly the success that it has if it were not inclusive, a full partnership and "free standing." You certainly are to be commended as a political body for having had the foresight and fortitude to create such a viable Commission at that time! We pray that the same degree of foresight and fortitude is present as you consider HOUSE BILL No. 2543 today.

Though the degree of urgency is high; as African-Americans we remain optimistic and believe that there will be sufficient change to rectify this crippling condition.

Mr. Chairman and members of this Committee, your vote for HOUSE BILL No. 2543 will be more evidence that as a legislative body the vital needs of your constituents do not go unnoticed nor unattended. Further, that informed decisions are cost effective and always more relative. I am not a proponent of bigger, more expensive government. The fact is that our present societal course is directly responsible for far greater governmental and sociological expense than the implementation of HOUSE BILL No. 2543 could ever be!

I am grateful to you Mr. Smith, and to this august body for allowing me the time to put forth my thoughts and feelings on this critical matter. Your questions, should there be any, are most welcome.

*House Gov't Org. & Elections  
February 22, 1994  
Attachment 2*

**Statement to the Governmental Organization and Elections Committee  
Kansas House of Representatives**

**February 22, 1994**

**Ms. Smith and Members of the Committee:**

This joint statement is from Roy Abbott, Psychologist and Dr. Jean E. White, Ex-Officio, Black Women's Network, Inc. Thank you for the opportunity to present our statement.

We sincerely urge you to vote for passage of House Bill 2543, with these amendment: 1) That the organization be an "Advisory Commission:" and 2) that it be independent as is the Kansas Human Rights Commission. We firmly believe these amendments will contribute to a viable partnership with state agencies.

We believe that an Advisory Commission on African-American Affairs is a practical way to get better results. We are convinced the moral test of good public policy is whether it is cost-effective and promotes the democratic principles of justice and inclusion. With the establishment of this type of organization, this could be a cost-effective way for the state and African-Americans to become partners in the policy making process.

In closing, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, the African-American community wants to be involved. An Advisory Commission on African-American affairs will produce benefits far greater than its cost. We concur with the statement of the African-American Community Forum, that we do not need another study! What we need is an organization working in concert with other agencies to make programs more effective and efficient in delivering the programs and services. That organization, we firmly believe is an Advisory Commission on African-American Affairs.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, your vote, for passage of the 2543. With amendments will signal your intent and commitment to better, more effective and efficient government.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this statement.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND ELECTION

FEBRUARY 22, 1994

HB 2543

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAR BEFORE YOUR COMMITTEE. MY NAME IS CAROLYN CAMPBELL, RETIREE OF SOUTHWESTERN BELL TEL. CO., AND MEMBER OF ST. MARK'S AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, TOPEKA.

I APPEAR IN SUPPORT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ADVISORY COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS. THE STATE OF KANSAS IS UNIQUE IN AS MUCH AS THE AFRICAN AMERICAN POPULATION IS APPROXIMATELY 6%. MANY TIMES WE ASSUME WHAT THE MAJORITY DOES WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY. EVEN THOUGH WE KNOW THIS IS NOT THE CASE, WE CONTINUE TO ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE OUT OF TOUCH WITH OTHER SEGMENTS OF OUR COMMUNITY BECAUSE WE ARE NOT INVOLVED. BECAUSE WE ARE BASICALLY A PRODUCT OF OUR OWN ENVIRONMENT, WHERE WE LIVE AND GO TO SCHOOL, MANY OF US CAN GO A LIFETIME WITHOUT MAKING AN EFFORT TO KNOW AND UNDERSTAND THE CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND OTHER NEEDS OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN. FURTHERMORE, OUR WORK ENVIRONMENT DOES NOT AFFORD US THE OPPORTUNITY TO UNDERSTAND THE AFRICAN AMERICAN. OFTENTIMES, THE AFRICAN AMERICAN IS LEFT OUT BECAUSE OF THE COMPETITION OF THE MAJORITY COMMUNITY AND THE FACT THE MAJORITY COMMUNITY DOES NOT COME IN CONTACT WITH US. THE AFRICAN AMERICAN ADVISORY COMMISSION COULD GO A LONG WAY HELPING TO CLOSE THE GAP OF THESE DEFICIENCIES AND REALLY BENEFIT BOTH THE MAJORITY AND THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS, THE COMMISSION WOULD BE BENEFICIAL IN ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, PREVENTATIVE HEALTH CARE AND CULTURAL NEEDS. I RECOMMEND HB2543 BE PASSED IN AN AMENDED FORM WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMISSION AND THAT IT BE INDEPENDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF THIS BILL.

*House Gov't Org + Elections*  
*February 22, 1994*  
*Attachment 3*  
*Carolyn L. Campbell*  
3116 S. E. Bryant  
Topeka, Kansas 66605



FEBRUARY 22, 1994

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TO YOU, REGARDING THE ISSUE BEFORE YOU. WHICH IS OF THE HIGHEST PRIORITY. THAT BEING AN ADVISORY COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS. THAT SUCH A COMMISSION IS BEING ENTERTAINED AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME TO BECOME PART OF KANSAS LAW IS EXTREMELY TIMELY AND APPROPRIATE.

ITS CERTAINLY SPEAKS TO THE FACT OF THE CONTINUOUS GROWTH IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF KANSANS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GOOD GOVERNMENT IN PROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL OF KANSANS. GOOD GOVERNMENT STARTS WITH GOOD ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES, APPROPRIATE STAFFING AND ECONOMIC MEANS FOR WHICH TO GATHER ACCURATE DATA, QUALITY PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THOSE PROGRAMS IN AN EFFECTIVE MANNER.

CERTAINLY THERE IS A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF INFORMATION ALREADY IN HAND IN VARIES PLACES THAT INDICATES THAT THERE IS A MUCH NEEDED EMPHASIS ON IMPROVING THE OPPORTUNITY, AND IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS IN KANSAS.

UNFORTUNATELY, MANY OF THE STATISTICS FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS ARE TOO HIGH. OUR STATISTICS REFLECT A LACK OF THE CAPACITY OF KANSAS TO UTILIZE AFRICAN AMERICANS EFFECTIVELY. CERTAINLY, THIS DIMINISHES THE LIFE OF AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL KANSANS.

THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IS DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGHER THAN OTHERS. THE HEALTH STATISTICS INDICATE A HIGHER PROPORTIONAL OF ILL EFFECTS OF DISEASES FOR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CONDITIONS INDICATE A GROSSLY DISPROPORTION NUMBER OF AFRICAN AMERICANS SERVICED BY THE JUSTICE CORRECTIONAL SEGMENTS OF KANSAS GOVERNMENT.

THE STATISTICS FROM THE EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT INDICATES A GROSSLY LOWER THAN WOULD BE EXPECTED ENROLLMENT IN AFRICAN AMERICAS HIGHER LEVEL OF EDUCATION. THESE ARE ONLY SOME OF THE AREAS OF LIFE THAT REFLECT THE DISPARITY IN THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN IN KANSAS THERE ARE MOST APPARENT.

THAT THESE DISPARITIES EXIST, INDICATE A STRONG NEED FOR A TASK FOCUS AGENCIES TO WORK CONJUNCTIVELY WITH OTHER AGENCIES TO IMPROVE THESE AREAS OF LIFE.

IF IN FACT OTHER AGENCIES WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS WITHOUT THE NEEDED SUPPORT OF A TASK OF FOCUS AGENCIES, THE PRESENT CONDITIONS WOULD NOT EXIST.

*House Gov't Org + Elections  
February 22, 1994  
Attachment 4*

IN THE PAST WHEN THERE HAS BEEN A NEED TO STIMULATE THE QUALITY OF ECONOMIC LIFE IN KANSAS, KANSAS LEGISLATORS HAS BEEN WILLING TO TAKE THE NECESSARY STEPS IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR WHITE KANSANS. THE CREATIONS OF OTHER DEPARTMENTS HAVE SERVED KANSAS WELL.

IT IS A STEP FORWARD IN THE HUMANE PROCESS OF ALL PEOPLE EQUALLY BENEFITING FROM THE GOVERNMENT TO ENACT THIS COMMISSION.

IT IS CERTAINLY NOT THE PANACEA OR THE FINAL SOLUTION TO A DISTORTED UNJUST SYSTEM THAT HAS LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR THE CONTINUOUS ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE AFRICAN AMERICANS WORK AT A GROSS DISADVANTAGE IN BOTH THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR OF THIS STATE AND NATION. BUT IT CERTAINLY WILL BE A STEP FORWARD AND A COST EFFICIENT MEANS TO MOVING CLOSER TO A MORE JUST AND FAIR SOCIETY.

I URGE YOU TO ACT ON AN ADVISORY COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF AN IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL KANSANS.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

GILBERT R. PARKS, M.D.  
629 SE QUINCY #205  
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66603-3927  
913-233-1785

Statement of Cheryl Brown Henderson presented to  
the Governmental Organization and Elections Committee  
Kansas House of Representatives regarding House Bill 2543  
to establish an advisory committee on African-American Affairs  
February 22, 1994

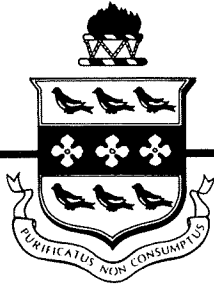
Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to express my views regarding this important legislative initiative.

My name is Cheryl Brown Henderson. I am President of the Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence and Research. This is a Kansas Based non-profit Foundation established as a living tribute to the attorneys and plaintiffs in the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision of 1954, Brown v the Board of Education. Our purpose is to provide scholarships to minority students entering teacher education, convene programs to promote multicultural understanding and support research projects on educational equity.

As the African American population of Kansas continues to grow it is imperative that governmental policies reflect the needs of this vital segment. We can best accomplish this by the establishment of a viable independent unit of government with the appropriate advocacy and advisory powers to impact the policies of other state agencies and departments. Such an entity would ensure that education, employment, social services, health and economic development programs include provisions to improve the quality of life of African American residents of Kansas. Without such a state committee many African American children and families will no doubt continue to encounter road blocks to attaining economic self-sufficiency.

Your vote for passage of House Bill 2543 demonstrates support for a more inclusive and responsive state government.

*House Gov't Org & Elections  
February 22, 1994  
Attachment 5*



# WASHBURN UNIVERSITY

Veteran Affairs Office  
Topeka, Kansas 66621  
Phone 913-231-1010, Ext. 1629

February 18, 1994

The Honorable Marvin Smith  
Chairperson  
Governmental Organization and Elections  
House of Representatives  
Statehouse  
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear Mr. Smith,

I appreciate the opportunity to write this letter of support for the creation of an Advisory Committee on African-American Affairs.

Creation of such a committee would introduce an excellent instrument in assisting African/Black Americans, the legislative process, state agencies and entities, and all Kansans to become unified in the implementation, evaluation, and execution of programs and policies.

I support passage of House on Bill 2543. If the people of Kansas will "invest" in such an advisory committee, I am confident the people of Kansas will get a strong, consistent, meaningful return on their investment.

Sincerely,

Meredith Kidd  
Associate Dean of Students  
Director, Veteran Affairs Office  
Director, Services for Students With Disabilities Office

*House Gov't Org + Elections  
February 22, 1994  
Attachment 6*

**Statement to the Governmental Organization and Elections Committee  
Kansas House of Representatives**

**February 22, 1994**

**Ms. Smith and Members of the Committee:**

This joint statement is from Roy Abbott, Psychologist and Dr. Jean E. White, Ex-Officio, Black Women's Network, Inc. Thank you for the opportunity to present our statement.

We sincerely urge you to vote for passage of House Bill 2543, with these amendment: 1) That the organization be an "Advisory Commission:" and 2) that it be independent as is the Kansas Human Rights Commission. We firmly believe these amendments will contribute to a viable partnership with state agencies.

We believe that an Advisory Commission on African-American Affairs is a practical way to get better results. We are convinced the moral test of good public policy is whether it is cost-effective and promotes the democratic principles of justice and inclusion. With the establishment of this type of organization, this could be a cost-effective way for the state and African-Americans to become partners in the policy making process.

In closing, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, the African-American community wants to be involved. An Advisory Commission on African-American affairs will produce benefits far greater than its cost. We concur with the statement of the African-American Community Forum, that we do not need another study! What we need is an organization working in concert with other agencies to make programs more effective and efficient in delivering the programs and services. That organization, we firmly believe is an Advisory Commission on African-American Affairs.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, your vote, for passage of the 2543. With amendments will signal your intent and commitment to better, more effective and efficient government.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this statement.

*Devere Stout Org + Elections  
February 22, 1994  
Attachment 7*



# DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.

Topeka Alumnae Chapter  
P.O. Box 4524  
Topeka, Kansas 66604

February 16, 1994

The Honorable Marvin E. Smith  
Chairperson  
Governmental Organization and Elections Committee  
Room 115 South, Statehouse  
Topeka, Ks. 66612

Dear Representative Smith and Members of the Committee:

Our organization is writing in support of the establishment of an African-American Commission. Being an organization whose membership is predominantly black, we see the value in having such a commission.

Our history as Black Women has evolved simultaneously with the emancipation of slaves and the struggle for civil rights. Our organization's thrust is indeed public service and we express our values in building community projects for the public good. Therefore, we are truly interested in the establishment of an African-American Commission, which would provide African Americans an opportunity to have a voice among other rights and an appropriate medium to address various issues.

In closing, we urge you to vote for passage of House Bill 2543 with the suggested amendments: 1) The organization be an Advisory Commission and 2) that it be independent from the Department of Human Resources.

We appreciate your support in this matter.

Sincerely,

*Rhonda Egans*

Rhonda Egans, President  
Topeka Alumnae Chapter  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

*New Govt Org + Elections  
February 22, 1994  
Attachment 8*





Representative Marvin Smith, Chair  
House Committee on Governmental  
Organization and Elections  
Re: House Bill 2901

The National Organization for Women supports the passage  
H.B.2901.

Following the creation of President's Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women in 1961, individual states were encouraged to organize Commissions to meet their specific needs in addressing the complexity of problems and issues facing women. Today forty-six states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia have formed commissions. Thirty states are currently funding their commissions. Many states in the Mid-west have commissions, including all of our bordering states. Nebraska established its commission in 1964 (thirty years ago) and it became a statutory state agency in 1971.

Although women are gaining some ground particularly in the areas of economics, women still continue to earn less than their male counterparts. The current figures show women earning seventy-two cents compared to one-dollar earned by males in the workforce. Women generally work fewer hours, many are considered part-time and therefore not eligible for health, retirement, leave and other benefits. Whether married-couple families or single-head of household, the single most significant trend has been the increase in numbers of working mothers. The U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau has released figures projecting a 26 million expected net increase in the civilian labor force between 1990 and the year 2005, women will account for 15 million or 62 percent of the net growth, with Hispanic, Asian and African-American women exceeding the average for all women. Although more women hold management positions than any other time, few have made breakthroughs to top level executive positions. It is estimated that only 1 or 2 percent of senior executives level officials are women. Not only must we meet the challenge of creating a workforce where women can economically excel, but we will be faced with a workforce that will be increasingly culturally diverse. Many women are under-trained, under-educated, and not prepared for the challenges of the technical age. There is a growing concern and pressure for Welfare reform. Displaced homemakers now account for largest growing percentage of persons living below poverty.

I hope that I have been able to provide a microcosm of the unique challenges facing our state. Your challenge is the reshaping of public policy. Our challenge is to identify the people with vision, intelligence, skills and the commitment, who will develop projects, technical assistance and assess the status of women of Kansas and recommend methods for overcoming these barriers. Every loaf of bread needs yeast, and today we are here to ask you for that yeast.

*House Gov't Org + Elections  
February 22, 1994  
Attachment 9*

Respectfully Submitted, Sue Ledbetter-Lobbyist N.O.W.



Mayor's Commission  
on the  
Status of Women

Feb, 22, 1994

To: The House Committee on Governmental Organizations & Elections

From: Judy Moler, Chair, Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women - Topeka

Re: HB 2901

Rep Smith, members of the Committee, I am speaking to you today in favor of HB 2901, establishing a Kansas Commission on the Status of Women. I am Judy Moler and am the current Chair of the Topeka Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women. During my tenure on the Topeka Commission, I have had the opportunity to interact with other commissions across the country. Kansas is one of only a handful of states that do not have a Commission on the Status of Women. Most other states have a paid staff person in addition.

The Topeka Mayor's Commission was established in 1974 the 2nd of its kind in its county. Our commission works to eliminate gender discrimination in employment, education and health. In addition, we address other women's issues such as crime reduction, teenage pregnancy and affordable child care.

We have helped sponsor the annual Women & Money Series here in Topeka, the Women of Color Conference and this July we will host the Annual meeting of the National Commission on the Status of Women here in Topeka.

The major accomplishment of securing the National meeting here in Topeka was due to the hard work & effort of ones small commission. The existence of a statewide commission could make a difference for women and their families across Kansas.

*House Govt Org + Elections  
February 22, 1994  
Attachment 10*

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TOPEKA

HOUSE OF  
 REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS  
 AGRICULTURE  
 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
 PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE

February 22, 1994

**COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND ELECTIONS  
 HB 2901 - AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE KANSAS COMMISSION ON THE  
 STATUS OF WOMEN**

I am proud to be one of the sponsors of HB 2901. The creation of a COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN is long overdue.

Despite action to bring about equal treatment of women in all areas of society and the progress that has been made in several areas, the need for concern regarding women's issues continues.

Women's issues must be addressed, given the percentage of women in the work force, the increase in poverty of female headed households, and the enormous untapped resource they represent for our society.

A few statistical facts help us in understanding some of the disparities which call for a COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN in Kansas:

1. In 1990, 40 percent of the 56.6 million persons in the U.S. work force were women.
2. The participation of women in the labor force grew from 37.7 percent in 1960 to 55.3 percent in 1986, a rise accounting for 60 percent of the total growth in the work force during that period.
3. In 1990, 67 percent of mothers of children under 18 worked for pay, compared with 56.6 percent in 1980.
4. In 1990, 50 percent of women with children under one year were in the work force. (9.4 million working mothers of pre-school children.)
5. Of the total female work force in 1990 --
  - nearly 75 percent were married.
  - 81 percent of the divorced women with children (2.6 million) were working.
  - African American women are over three times more likely to be single heads of households than white women are; and those with children are somewhat more likely to be in the labor force. 68.2 percent to 66.7 percent.
6. There is great disparity between society's response to women, and society's response to men. Consider:

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- Women constitute 40 percent of the total labor force, and they hold 62 percent of the service entry jobs.
- In 1984, women earned only 70 percent of what men earned; 59 cents for every dollar earned by men. In 1989, the gap narrowed to 70 cents for every dollar men earned. However, this was not brought about by an increase in earnings for women. The narrowing resulted from men earning less.

Although the employment rate for women has risen rapidly since 1960, there has not been a parallel change in median income. In 1984, the median income for women in full-time employment was \$15,422; for men, \$24,000. The median income for women, therefore, was only 64 percent of the median income for men. For female-headed households, the median income from all sources was only 43 percent of the median income for married-couple families.

Kansas and the nation continues to experience an increase in the number of female-headed households. Between 1959 and 1984, this family form increased by 168 percent, while male-headed families increased by only 7 percent. By 1984, women headed 16 percent of all households.

The most dramatic increase has been in female-headed households with children. In 1984, 20 percent of the families with children under 18 were headed by women. It was predicted that by 1990, one-half of the children in the U.S. would spend part of their childhood living with one parent.

Within this category of mother-only households, the fastest growing type of family form is the household headed by never-married mothers. The number of such households increased fourfold between 1970 and 1982.

Accompanying the change in family form is the continued high poverty rate for female-headed households--34.5 percent in 1984 versus 6.9 percent for all married-couple families. Whereas, only 27 percent of all the poor lived in female-headed households in 1960, almost one-half of all the poor now live in these households. Within this group, those who are particularly vulnerable to long-term and persistent poverty are the young, never-married mothers, and the growing number of elderly women.

### THE POLICY STATEMENT

Kansas has a responsibility to women, to families, and to men, to initiate and support activities that can improve this situation. Specifically, the Kansas Legislature should be concerned with:

1. Addressing sex discrimination that continues within our society.
2. Achieving pay equity for women throughout the state.
3. Addressing the consequences of the feminization of poverty through the development of sound sexist free social and economic policies.

Specifically we should be engaged in a comprehensive on-going effort to address:

1. HUMAN RIGHTS---to encourage the development of comprehensive, subsidized public and private child care programs to meet the needs of parents and children at all economic

levels; to work toward an open housing policy that provides fair treatment to women and their families. This includes stopping discriminatory practices that deny adequate shelter to women. It includes working toward the elimination of discrimination that women experience in the health, mental health, and criminal justice systems.

2. CIVIL RIGHTS---to seek national ratification and implementation of the equal rights amendment and to seek enforcement of existing civil rights legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex.
3. ECONOMIC RIGHTS---to work toward elimination of all tax inequities affecting women; to seek the amendment of the Social Security Act; to provide adequate and equitable public assistance nationwide; and to provide equitable retirement and fringe benefits for families with employed wives, female heads of households, and widows and their children; and to grant parental leave, ensure pay equity, and in general to develop an income-support system that will permit all women to achieve their fullest potential.
4. POLITICAL RIGHTS---to work to insure that women are appointed or elected to positions of highest responsibility in all branches of state, local and federal governments. Such positions include cabinet members, agency heads, and judgeships. ---to make a commitment to achieve equal upward mobility for women in state civil service; and to seek the equitable inclusion of women in state councils, commissions, and hearings.
5. EMPLOYMENT AND PROFESSIONAL ISSUES---to acknowledge the contributions of women and to eliminate assumed sexual differences that currently influence policy and practice; to involve women in the development of policy and the delivery of education, health and social services; to ensure that women's needs are met and that these services are not used as inadequate substitutes for basic societal opportunities; and to eliminate salary differences between men and women who have similar job qualifications and responsibilities.

### CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The creation of a COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN holds the promise of advancing the quality of life for all Kansans. Adopting this proposed legislation would represent a milestone not just for the women, but for our children and for the men of this state.

This is a moment whose time has come. I applaud the women and men who are carrying this initiative forward.

Mr. Chair, I trust that you will do all that is within your power to bring the vision of the proposal for a COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN to reality in Kansas.

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TOPEKA

HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES

## COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

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TAXATION

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT  
ADVISORY BOARD  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES BOARD  
NCSL, STATE-LOCAL-TRIBAL RELATIONS,  
CHAIRMAN  
NCSL, THE WOMEN'S NETWORK BOARD

## GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS

HB 2901 - Commission on Status of Women

Chairman Smith, and members of Government Organization and Elections, I and the 64 sponsors of HB 2901 want to thank you for taking time to schedule a hearing. There are others in the room who more eloquently can articulate the purpose of HB 2901, but I do want to say just a few words about why I believe a Commission on Status of Women is important to the State of Kansas.

I won't go into the details of the bill. You can read it for yourself, but note Section 3 of the bill which outlines the purpose and anticipated products of the Commission on the Status of Women. These are worthy goals for a state like Kansas who is one of the leaders in the number of elected women serving in the Legislature. Kansas has had a history of firsts for women, but we currently lag behind many other states who already have a Commission on the Status of Women.

Why is a commission important in the larger legislative scheme of issues facing us? I could be flippant and say that we have had our years of eco-devo, children and family, etc., but never the year of the woman and now it's our turn! But let me be serious for a minute and emphasize the rapidly changing world in which we live. The changes will have dramatic effects in our society and our state, on business, on families, on health care, and the coming of "gray America, for which we are not prepared. Of course, you might wonder why I am focusing on women rather than Mr. Average Joe America, and a Commission on the Status of Men. Well, I have news for you. . . the average American is now Ms. Average Jane America.

I recently read an article which provided some interesting information about the average woman in America. You can decide for yourself whether this woman is your wife, daughter, neighbor, or even a colleague. It reported that Ms. Average American just turned 33. She is 5'4" tall and weighs 143 lbs., although she has been on a diet all year. She wears glasses or contacts and she thinks she looks younger than she is. She has brown hair, 1.8 children, a daughter named Jennifer, a son named Michael and it will take \$140,000 to raise each of her children to age 18.

Ms. Average is a Protestant, but she didn't go to church last week. She wears a size 7 1/2 shoe and complains of foot pain. She wears a size 12 dress but always tries on a size 10 before she buys. She married at age 24 and her size six engagement ring cost over \$800. She wears jewelry every day. She is not rich, with an annual income less than \$20,000, but she has \$104 in her purse, along with keys, a wallet, comb, makeup and an address book. She writes 24 checks per month and charges \$160 per month on ten credit cards.

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She has lost only two teeth, which is better than her mother at the same age, and much better than her grandmother. She will still loose another eight by the time she is 70. Ms. Average will get into her eight-year-old blue sedan 1,500 times this year and drive over 9,000 miles. She will drive ten miles home from her sales job to her 1,000 square foot \$60,000 house. She comes home to a husband, children, pets, six radios, two TV sets, a stereo and a VCR, but won't have time for entertainment because she faces 3.5 hours of homework and childcare. She doesn't know it, but she will be the victim of a crime not once, but three times in her life. She has a 50/50 chance of divorce and the odds are 10-to-1 that she will someday be a widow.

In 1980 the average American was 30 years old. Fifty years ago, the average American was a 29 year old male blue-collar worker. By the year 2000, the average American will be 40!

Interesting article, but what does it mean to Kansas? Who knows, but we need to know! We do know that the status of women as heads of the household, the status of women as the sole support of their families, and the economic status of women is changing. And we know we are not prepared to meet these changes!

How does the above information relate to another statistic that says women between the ages of 22-44 are the fastest growing population of people afflicted with Aids? (By the end of 1993, New York state predicted that Aids will be the number one cause of death among women in their reproductive years.) If the average Kansas is within that age population, should we not prepare for the effects of the disease on the workplace, the family, the health care system? Of course, but who will take the leadership role to bring some of these issues to the forefront?

We are not New York, and this statistic is undoubtedly not true for Kansas. But I can share astory with you about a woman I met in an Aids Home in Missouri (by the way, Kansas does not have a residential facilitiy in the metro-area) who contacted the disease from her now-deceased husband. She has four young children, no extended family, and wants to provide for her children upon her death. She is an innocent victim of a killer disease, and we do not know how many more women in Kansas might be in a similar situation. Are we preparing for the potential of homeless children? Do we know how many women are heads of their household? Do we know how the disease of women economically, let alone socially, impact the state of Kansas?

What about women who are now surviving their spouse, living longer, and have no means of employment? Has the state taken this elderly population into consideration with its job training and housing programs? I could go on and on, but you get the idea. The average Kansan of today is much different than the average Kansan of twenty years ago, as will be the average Kansas in the year 2000. We must focus some attention and effort on this growing population and move the status on women away from being minorities to the status of women as the majority!

Please join the majority in the House of Representatives who support the majority in Kansas. . . the women of this progressive state! Thank you!

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I commend to you the passage of a bill authorizing a Kansas Commission on the Status of Women.

In the 1970s Congress appropriated money to provide for a number of social action programs. Among them were funds for local Commissions on the Status of Women. In Wichita, the early Commission members directed staff to create Public Service Announcements on TV concerning credit ratings for women. Those PSAs pointed out that married women, using joint bank accounts with their husbands, lost their credit identity.

I was appalled when I called the Better Business Bureau and discovered that, although I paid taxes and bills and loans, all the credit information was listed only in my husband's name.

Following the information given me by Commission staff, I opened checking and savings accounts in my own name and took out a small loan. I also opened store credit accounts and paid them from my bank accounts. I felt a bit silly and traitorous to my husband to set up separate accounts. He, however, was even more angry than I that my earnings and payments were listed as his. When he died, I had in place a credit record and the knowledge of how to manage my finances.

Due to the education of the public and politicians about this unfair situation, the Fair Credit Act was passed. Now shared credit may be listed in more than one name.

After a time, the federal money ran out for the Commission. The City Council has not appropriated sufficient money to provide adequate staff for the Commission on the Status of Women. I was appointed to that Commission in the mid 80s and was distressed to find that Commission members had to raise money, through the Friends of the CSW, in order to provide any services to the community. This was in sharp contrast to other local boards on which I have served: Aging, Housing, Health. All of these have well established staff and income.

Since we no longer have a dynamic resource for women's issues at the city level, I propose that we need a CSW at the state level. Staff at that office could compile useful data, maintain a talent bank for boards and commissions appointments and serve as a clearinghouse for legislative needs. Funding for office space and permanent staff could put Kansas back in the forefront of identifying and solving the problems of its citizens.

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Concerned Women for America  
of Kansas  
P.O. Box 4, Seneca, Ks 66538  
(913) 336-2091

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HOUSE GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS  
Marvin E. Smith, Chairman  
HB 2901

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee:

My name is Sharon Stringfellow. I am a volunteer lobbyist for Concerned Women for America of Kansas. Concerned Women for America was founded in 1979 and has grown to become the largest women's public policy organization in the country with over 600,000 members.

We oppose HB 2901 as it currently stands. In my testimony I will discuss two areas of our concern.

1) We question whether another commission is necessary. We too are concerned about the plight of women in today's society. Some in our organization are struggling working moms. Some are divorced single moms. But is another commission the answer? We already have numerous women's commissions on the federal level. Their research and information are available for our use. We already have numerous women's groups in the private sector, some receiving federal funds, that speak to women's issues. These private groups are very able to access our representative form of government to address their concerns.

2) Our second concern is that this bill focuses its attention not on the plight and success of all women in their chosen vocations but rather only on paid working women. Many women today choose to be career moms and homemakers. Their choice often involves great sacrifice. Some in our organization are "stay-at-home moms" who struggle to make ends meet. It often means shopping at garage sales rather than Dillard's or J.C. Penney's and making the family vacation a trip to World's of Fun instead of the Bahamas or even the Ozarks. This is their choice because they believe that the most important and valuable thing they can do is to raise their children, working in partnership with their husbands to keep their homes together. The needs of these working women are not

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addressed in this bill.

Neither does this bill represent women who are currently in the work force but who yearn to be able to be at home, raising their own families. Many would be able to do this if we had a tax code that did not penalize married couples, that offered a higher standard deduction for families, and that allowed significant tax credits for moms who care for their own children. These women and their needs are not addressed in this bill.

Numerous studies show that so many of today's societal problems come from the breakdown of the family unit. Tipper Gore, the Vice-President's wife, was quoted in this month's edition of Redbook as saying about her husband and her marriage, "If I had pursued a career we would have had two separate lives, and I don't even know that we would have stayed married". It is very difficult on marriages and children when both parents work. It is ironic that in a legislative session that is inundated with crime bills, where lawmakers are distraught as how to impart the work ethic in children, and where there is discussion about paying children to go to school, that we have this bill, that focuses "on the steady expansion of women in the work place" (Sec. 3. (a)), and puts at risk their families. This bill negates by neglect the needs and desires of so very many women.

It is because of these concerns that we cannot support this bill, rather we oppose HB 2901.

TO: Mr. Chairman  
Members of the committee

My name is Linda Knola and I am a registered nurse.  
I oppose HB2109 for the following reason.

It is a committee intending to represent women of Kansas and explore their roles in the workplace, as well as evaluating how they can better balance home-life versus work-life. Personally I feel every woman is unique in her needs and could not possibly be fairly represented by a statewide commission. The government was not created to help women with time-management.

I would be happy to stand for questioning regarding HB2109.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my viewpoint,

*Linda Knola R.N.*

Linda Knola R.N.

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