

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Al Ramirez at 1:30 p.m. on March 22, 1994 in Room 531-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present: Julian Efird, Legislative Research Department
Fred Carman, Revisor of Statutes
Jackie Breymeyer, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Representative Vickrey
Edward Rowe, League of Women Voters of Kansas
Debra Leib, Kansas Common Cause
Clyde Howard, Member, African-American
Community Forum Steering Committee
Amber Plumb-Clark, Chairperson, Kansas Black
Republican Council
Mordean Taylor-Archer, Black Democrat Caucus
of Kansas
The Reverend Ken Hill
Bill Minner, Coordinating Committee of the Black Community
K. C. Groves, Kansas NAACP

Others attending: See attached list

Chairman Ramirez called the meeting to order and asked for action on the minutes of March 15, 16, 17, 18, and 21. Senator Papay moved approval of the minutes. Senator Reynolds gave a second to the motion. The motion carried.

HB 2702--prohibits legislators from lobbying within one year following term of office

Representative Vickrey, bill sponsor, stated the bill would restrict an elected or an appointed state legislator from lobbying within one year following that individual's resignation from office or within one year of the expiration of that individual's term, whichever occurs. This restriction would become effective on or after July 1, 1995. The focus of legislators should be to work with the taxpayer and legislators should be free from commitments to outside interests for a period of time after leaving office. He noted the changes in the bill, with particular reference to (b). Representative Vickrey said that this bill would stop the revolving door effect. The legislator's first priority should be to represent the people in his/her district and to have the attitude that he/she is here to do the best job for them and to represent their interests.

Several questions and comments were directed to Representative Vickrey. He commented that he is not saying that every circumstance is bad, but legislators are here to represent the people that elected them and not to take advantage of a situation to help a special interest group.

The Chairman welcomed former Representative Norman Justice and former Senator Billy McRae to the committee.

Comments were made regarding an interview Representative Vickrey had given wherein he had stated he found some of the finest people in the Legislature in his experience as a Legislator for the first year. People do work hard and try to represent their people back home.

Representative Vickrey was asked if state officers could get a lobbying job after their term of office expired. His response was that he would have like to include statewide offices and appointments, but that would have made the bill too broad and therefore too difficult to pass.

In response to another comment Representative Vickrey said that he has been impressed with the quality of work of Senators and Representatives and the people who work in public office, but at times relationships develop that are not in the best interests of the people represented back home.

Representative Vickrey was asked for examples of abuse of the system. He was unable to give any specific examples, but stated that sometimes it is easier and more ethical to take care of the problem before it is exposed in the media and causes a public outcry; it is more maintenance than a reaction to a problem. Most legislators would like to think that legislation is sponsored that precludes the problem rather than reacts to problems.

After several further comments, Chairman Ramirez thanked Representative Vickrey and called on the next conferee on the bill.

Edward Rowe, League of Women Voters of Kansas, appeared on the bill. (Attachment 1) Legislators are elected to serve the people and it is painful when a legislator becomes a 'hired gun' for a special interest. He ended his testimony by stating those who come down on the side of eliminating this potential conflict between public and private interest will vote for **HB 2702**.

Mr. Rowe was asked about his testimony which listed him as a member of the lobby corps. He was asked if he was a 'hired gun' and if anyone had proposed a statute to prohibit him from being a member of the lobby corps. He replied that he was a member of the lobby corps and no one had passed any legislation prohibiting him from being a lobbyist.

It was commented that the papers talk about lobbyists all the time. The committee member has never seen the type of lobbyist of which the newspaper speaks.

Mr. Rowe commented that on an issue that didn't affect a particular legislator's district, a lobbyist who was friendly with a particular legislator could influence him/her.

The comment was made to Mr. Rowe that information from both sides of an issue is heard, weighed, and then an informed decision is made.

Mr. Rowe said it seems a little unfortunate that the career ladder seems to go from legislator to lobbyist for some people.

Debra Leib, Kansas Common Cause, spoke next in support of the bill and distributed testimony (Attachment 2) Ms. Leib's testimony stated the conflict-of-interest statutes must contain clearly defined prohibitions on the post-employment activity of former public officials. The practice of legislator and other public officials leaving positions of power and influence in government to return immediately as lobbyists or other representatives of interests that do business with the state is known as the 'revolving door'. Approximately 27 states currently have revolving door provisions prohibiting this activity.

Ms. Leib ended her testimony by stating a "cooling off" period of at least a year helps create a more equitable playing field and prevents even the appearance of such abuse.

Carol Williams, Governmental Standards and Conduct, was asked by the Chairman if there had been any problem with legislators becoming lobbyists. She replied, 'no'.

The Chairman stated the hearing on **HB 2702** was closed.

The Committee turned to **HB 2543**--advisory commission on African-American affairs

Staff briefed the committee on the bill.

Clyde Howard, member of the African-American Community Forum steering committee, was first to address the bill. Copies of his testimony were distributed (Attachment 3) His testimony stated the commission would be cost effective and practical. It will allow African-Americans to be involved in policy research designed to advise the Governor, the Legislature and state agencies on policies, services and programs to address the needs of African-Americans.

Amber Plumb-Clark, Kansas Black Republican Council, addressed the bill. (Attachment 4) Her testimony stated that critical issues of concern need to be addressed now. The bill can minimize the issues at hand today for generations to come and will enable the black community in Kansas to address issues of particular concern to black Kansans for the ultimate good of all Kansans.

Mordean Taylor-Archer, representing the Black Democrat Caucus of Kansas, spoke to the bill and submitted her testimony (Attachment 5) The Commission will be a unifying body and will be in a position to recommend strategies to address these and other long standing problems found in the community. The Commission will provide a communication link, serve as a representative body for research, keep the

community informed, provide current statistics and organize state conference and workshops. Ms. Taylor-Archer ended her testimony by urging support for the Commission.

The Reverend Ken Hill was present to speak in support of the bill. He said to the Senators that the affairs of black people may be in troublesome situations these days because African-Americans are not attending to the business of their own. For 85 years, the NAACP has been in the forefront of the struggle. It hasn't been right that other people have been making the decisions for them as a people. Blacks are the largest minority in the United States. He has not been able to tell his children and grandchildren that there is going to be a better day. Reverend Hill stated that his people must get involved in the process of doing those things.

Bill Minner spoke in support of the bill. Mr. Minner stated that as of December, 1993, the Kansas prison population was 5,732; of that number 2,224 were African-American, representing a trend in population of 39%. Many of these inmates are young people. If the Commission would do nothing other than redirect or call one, two, or more to different paths, as opposed to winding up as the inmates in Kansas prisons and becoming public charges on the State, and a tremendous tax burden, it would be worth it. There are precious few tax dollars and they should be used wisely. There are many problems and too few tax dollars to address those problems. The problems must be looked at in the African-American community, particularly those which are causing a tremendous tax burden on us as taxpayers in this state.

Mr. Minner was asked if he had any statistics on the cost of incarceration of a prisoner for a year. A statistic was provided of approximately \$22,000 per year.

K. C. Groves, representing the Kansas State conference branch of the NAACP, was the final conferee on the bill. Mr. Groves stated the NAACP has 28 branches and 3,000 plus members in Kansas. Ms. Louisa Fletcher is now and has been the President of the NAACP for 21 years. He said that many of the committee members are cognizant of the Hispanic Affairs committee that has been in place for several successful years. An African-American Affairs commission will be even more successful. Currently there is no successful gathering of information on problems concerning African-Americans in Kansas. The needs of African-Americans are not fully understood, therefore no funds from federal and other organizations are solicited to effectuate relief of the aforesaid problems. The Governor has made these recommendations in the FY94 budget. The hope is that this effort will be supported.

Testimony was submitted in support of **HB 2543** by Joe Douglas, Jr., Topeka, Kansas (Attachment 6); and by Lontena Gentry, Chairperson, Concerned Citizens for Equal Justice (Attachment 7)

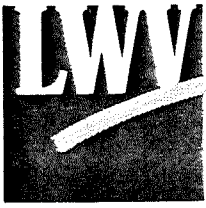
The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

GUEST LIST

COMMITTEE: SENATE GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

DATE: March 22, 1994

NAME	ADDRESS	COMPANY / ORGANIZATION
Dwain E. Archer	^{Manhattan} 1205 GREYSTONE RD	BLACK BLACK DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS
Mordean J. Archer	1205 Graystone, Manhattan	Black Democrat Caucus
Robert Walker	1902 Oakman KKK	18th Street Store
K C Guss	1932 N 17	KCC
Lee Ray Meely		KCCs
Linda Lee	2728 N 10th	KCCs
Rep. Norman E. Justice Rtd	1204 Everett Dr.	Black Democrat Caucus, Mrs. 1906 K. 66102
REV. KEN HILL	931 JEWELL-TOPKA	NAACP-STATE OFFICER
William V. Miner	3500 SW Oakley	CCBC, Chairman
James Coleman	2622 DE Adams	AME Church
Orde Howard	2518 SW Ashworth PC	AME Church
Robert & Jacquie Bugg	3721 Evans Dr.	Black Caucus
R. Bugg	Burlington, Mo	of KANSAS Burlington
EDWARD ROWE	EMPORIA, KS	LEAGUE OF WOMAN VOTERS
JENE VICKREY	6740 W 263rd	Representative of KS
Donny Scroggins	3730 Truman	WASH DC Black Caucus of Kansas
Sid Sander	401 Topoka Blvd	KDHR
TROY G. SCROGGINS	3341 Moreland Ave Dr.	City of Topoka
Foster Christy	233 SE Lincoln	AME Church
DEBRA LEIB	TOPKA	COMMON CAUSE
Ricky L. SPENCE	816 Polk	BIAS BUSTERS OF KS
Curtis E. Bazemore	7236 Greenview Dr	TOPKA Black Republican Chair
Arthur	Topoka	Arthur



THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF KANSAS

March 21, 1994

TO: Senator Al Ramirez
Chairman, Senate Committee on Governmental Organization
Room 128-S
Statehouse, Topeka

FROM: Edward Rowe, member of lobby corps
League of Women Voters of Kansas

RE: Support of HB 2702, which prohibits legislators from
lobbying for one year following terms of office

Many groups have pointed out the "revolving door" problem; legislators can leave the legislature and immediately become lobbyists, taking advantage of the contacts with their former colleagues.

The League of Women Voters takes the position that it is important to "promote citizen participation in the political process" and that "undue influence" in the political process needs to be combated. We are in favor of any change in the direction of making the playing field level for all citizen groups who bring their concerns to the legislature. It seems obvious to us that lobbyists who have recently been legislators have an edge on everyone else.

We elect you to serve the people. It's worse than just disappointing when one of you quits the legislature, then turns around and uses your inside information to advance a special interest instead of the interest of all the people. (I can remember an uproar twenty or more years ago over a parallel issue: some Pentagon procurement officers, whose duty was to select the best equipment for our troops, on retirement went to work for the same corporations they had dealt with while they were in uniform. Maybe these officers made pure, unbiased, objective procurement decisions and never thought about pleasing a potential employer, but not many people were convinced.)

The issue of "closing the revolving door" in the Kansas Legislature was studied this last spring and summer by the Governor's Task Force on Ethics Reform. I have discussed the Task Force recommendations with Nancy Kindling, the former coordinator of our lobby corps and the person who represented the League of Women Voters on the Task Force. Some members of the Task Force wanted to prohibit legislators from becoming lobbyists for as long as 5 years, but the final consensus was one year.

During interim meetings in October the Senate Elections Committee was scheduled to meet to turn Task Force recommendations into legislation. When the Governor did not release them, the Elections Committee instead re-studied SB 44, a bill on lobbying which had passed both houses but had been vetoed by the Governor, purportedly for a drafting error. For a while SB 44 contained a provision prohibiting a legislator from becoming a lobbyist until one year after leaving the legislature. Unfortunately the conference committee deleted this provision.

We hope you will come down on the side of eliminating this conflict between public and private interest and will vote for HB 2702.

cc: members of Committee

Senate Hori, Org.
Attachment 1
3/22/94

Testimony before the
Senate Committee on Governmental Organization

March 22, 1994

by

Debra R. Leib
Executive Director, Kansas Common Cause

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Committee on Governmental Organization, my name is Debra Leib and I am executive director for Common Cause in Kansas. I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 2702, which would prohibit a legislator from being hired as a lobbyist for one year after leaving office.

Common Cause is a nonprofit, nonpartisan citizens' lobbying organization that works to make our government more open, accountable and accessible to ordinary men and women. We have over 2,100 members in Kansas and our state board includes members from Dodge City to Overland Park and from Marysville to Wichita.

As you may know, conflict-of-interest statutes have long been an important issue for Common Cause with the fundamental goal of preventing public officials from abusing -- or appearing to abuse -- the power and status of public office for private gain. We believe a sound conflict-of-interest statute must contain clearly defined prohibitions on the post-employment activity of former public officials.

The practice of legislators and other public officials leaving positions of power and influence in government only to return immediately as lobbyists or representatives of interests that do business with the state is known as the "revolving door." Legislators, because of personal relationships and knowledge of the system acquired during their tenure, can provide special access to the well-heeled special interests who hire them and exert unfair influence in setting public policy. At least 27 states currently have revolving door provisions prohibiting this activity.

In the absence of restrictions on public officials' post-employment activity, the revolving door creates the potential for abuse of the public trust. A "cooling off" period of at least a year helps create a more equitable playing field and prevents even the appearance of such abuse.

*Senate Gov. org.
Attachment 2
3/22/94*

Statement of the African-American Community Forum
Presented by Clyde Howard, Member of the Steering Committee
to the Senate Governmental Organization Committee

March 22, 1994

Chairman Ramirez and Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to present our statement.

We sincerely urge you to vote for passage of House Bill 2543. An Advisory Commission on African-American Affairs is cost-effective and practical. It will allow African-Americans to be involved in policy research designed to advise the Governor, the Legislature and state agencies on policies, services and programs to address African-Americans' needs.

Many programs 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 the Governor, the Legislature and state agencies want better results; we know African-Americans want more effective programs and services.

We are not advocating for bigger government! Rather, we are advocating for better government; for an investment that will save lives and money! Consider this!

- * The State will spend about \$47.6 million this year to house, feed and care for 2,224 African-American inmates in its prisons. Many of the inmates are dropouts.
- * The Governor has recommended that SRS receive \$9.2 million for KanWork daycare, \$10.8 million for General Assistance and \$135.5 million for Aid to Families With Dependent Children. GA clients receive \$140.00 per month; AFDC clients receive \$120.00 per month.

We believe an investment of \$170,000 for an Advisory Commission on African-American Affairs will save many millions of these dollars. This money could be used to:

- * Improve prenatal care and immunization programs, reduce the number and cost of low birth weight babies. As little as \$400 spent for prenatal care can prevent costs of up to \$400,000 over a child's lifetime. Each \$1 spent to immunize a child can save more than \$10 by reducing childhood illness and death from illness.
- * Reduce dropouts, and provide educational alternatives to reduce the impact of crime. Preventing 200 dropouts could allow \$4.2 million to be diverted from prisons to education and vocational training.

*Senate Gov. Org.
Attachment 3
3/22/94*

- 2-3
- * Strengthen KanWork services to get clients into jobs and get them off welfare; and reduce AFDC and GA caseloads. Moving KanWork clients into jobs reduces the costs the state pays for day care; helping 1,000 GA clients get off assistance could save \$140,000.

Through research and data collection the commission could advise agencies on ways to make their programs more effective.

Mr. Chairman and members, the African-Americans want to be involved as partners in the policy making process. An Advisory Commission on African-American Affairs is a cost-effective way to do so!

Mr. Chairman and members, your vote for passage of HB 2543 will signal your willingness to invest in better, more effective and efficient government.

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

aaac322.94

TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

MARCH 22, 1994

HOUSE BILL 2543

Chairperson Ramirez and Committee Members:

My name is Amber Plumb-Clark and I am Chairperson of the Kansas Black Republican Council (KBRC).

KBRC is supportive of this bill because our organization knows the deep concern in the Black Community of Kansas and recognizes that it is critical that issues of concern be addressed now.

We have analyzed issues of grave concern and find that **House Bill 2543** can minimize the issues at hand today for generations to come.

House Bill 2543 enables the Black Community in the State of Kansas to address issues of particular concern to Black Kansans for the ultimate good of all Kansans.

The Kansas Black Republican Council appreciates the opportunity to present to you today our support of **House Bill 2543** and respectfully request the support of this committee for **House Bill 2543**.

*Senate Gov. Arg.
Attachment 4
3/22/94*

BLACK DEMOCRAT CAUCUS OF KANSAS
STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS
MARCH 22, 1994

Good afternoon Senators.

My name is Mordean Taylor-Archer and I represent the Black Democrat Caucus of Kansas. We are here to seek your endorsement for establishing a Commission on African American Affairs. The importance of this issue, however, transcends party lines.

The Commission, in fact will be a unifying body that will not only pursue the interests of the African American community, it will be good for the state of Kansas. We know that Kansas cannot remain strong and viable if any segment of its population is allowed to deteriorate.

The study recently completed by Wichita State University points to the disproportionate share of social and economic problems confronted by African Americans in the state of Kansas. High unemployment rates, poverty, and crime are problems that call for broad sweeping policies and creative solutions.

The Commission on African American Affairs will be in a position to recommend strategies to address these and other long standing problems found in our community.

Other duties of the Commission on African American Affairs will be to:

1. Provide a communication link between the elected officials of Kansas and African American communities throughout the state. The Commission will provide you with current data on the needs of the communities so that you can use your political influence to address these concerns.
2. Serve as a representative body for policy research, program evaluation and advocacy for the development of solutions for service delivery issues and other problems that confront the community.
3. Keep the community informed of what is being done within the state by publishing newsletters and holding town meetings in various parts of the state. The meetings will provide opportunities for elected officials to dialogue with African American residents.

Senate Gov. Org.
Attachment 5
3/22/94

4. Provide current statistics on the major social problems and publish an annual report on the state of African Americans in Kansas.
5. Organize state conferences and workshops to discuss new strategies and ideas for resolving issues.

I will say in closing that not since Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education has there been such broad base support that pulls together various segments of the Black Community. Establishing a Commission on African American Affairs represents the hope of the possibilities that those of us who feel disenfranchised and forgotten, will have a voice and be heard in the political process in the State of Kansas.

Senators, this is important to us and it is important to the State of Kansas. We, the members of the Black Democrat Caucus, urge your support for a Commission on African American Affairs.

THE GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

KANSAS STATE SENATE

March 22, 1994

The Honorable Senator Al Ramirez and Members of the Committee:


I am sorry that I am unable to appear before you this afternoon. The information that I am presenting to the Committee is from my life experiences as well as materials which have come to my attention over the years.

The lead documentation presented to the House of Representatives on February 22 is still relative at this time.

A democracy should provide equal opportunity and protection for all of its members. This is regardless as to Race, socioeconomic level, Religion, or political affiliation. The information presented indicates that there is at least serious doubt as to whether all these needs are met for the African American community.

It would appear that government has the responsibility to provide the necessary ancillary help to see that these persons are assured equal access to the system of government through a positive voice which speaks for those who lack adequate representation in the decision making process; both in and outside of state government. An African American Affairs Commission would contribute greatly to the alleviation of these very real concerns.

Thank you so much for this time from your busy schedules.



Joe Douglas Jr.

1811 Indiana Ave.

Topeka, Kansas 66607

Tel. & FAX (913) 233-9255

Sen. Gov. Org.
Attachment 6
3/22/94

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. Of additional concern, 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.

AFFIRMATIVE DATA FOR STATEMENT RE. H.B. #2543

FEBRUARY 22, 1994

- Resurgence of hate groups in the U.S. and other countries. i.e. Posse Comitatus, Ku Klux Klan, Skin Heads and German Nazi's. Yuppy advocates of separatism.
- Racial slurs coming from high ranking government officials at the federal level.
- Alarming number of reported police brutality incidents based on race. i.e. Rodney King.
- The general educational dilemma which is compounded many fold for Black children and university level students. i.e. Racial isolation, severe attacks on affirmative action. Lower numbers of secondary and college level entrances and graduations.
- Higher and higher entrance and graduation levels.
- Inordinate numbers of Black men incarcerated (one in four between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine). More young Black men are in prison than there are in institutions of higher learning.
- Alarming number of attacks on Jewish Synagogues. i.e. Burning, defacing with spray paint. Why am I referring to the rising numbers of attacks on Jewish persons and propertys? Whenever Jewish persons are persecuted or attacked it simply means that attacks on Blacks and other people of color are soon to be forthcoming. This is a history lesson not taught in schools but in real life experiences!
- Assassinations: John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and lest we forget Lincoln Rockwell, head of the Nazi party in the U.S. The first three were feared because of societal changes which were presumed to be particularly beneficial to Blacks, other people of color, also, the poor and down trodden. Lincoln Rockwells assassination reasons are speculative but for Black leaders again the lesson is that if a White man (Lincoln Rockwell) can be assassinated in his country for advocating unpopular change; Black leaders who advocate change which some perceive as being negative should take note!
- Brown II ! Is Public Education reverting back to the elitist institution it once was?
- Continued isolation in this country by Race; but more importantly by socio-economic class.
- **The recurring saga of Capital punishment legislation. Odds are considerably higher for your execution if you are a person of color and poor! No rich man of any race has ever been executed in the U.S.! Not even Leopold and Loeb, the thrill killers.
- Elevated standards for entering the military. No longer a safety valve
- **¹ ***Please See! The Topeka Capital-Journal / Monday, March 21, 1994. *Re. Capital Punishment inequities!!***

J. D's. "SCRIBBLES"

¹ Added to original document 3/22/94

SUPPORT DATA FOR H.B. #2543

- In 1980 for example, 25, 500 minority students, largely Black and Hispanic, entered high school in Chicago. Four years later only 9,500 graduated, and of those only 2,000 could read at grade level. The situation in other cities is comparable.¹
- 70% of all Black students who enroll in four year colleges drop out at some point, as compared with 45% of Whites.¹
- Blacks in graduate and professional schools face a similarly worsening or stagnating fate. For example, from 1977 to 1990, though the number of Ph. D.s awarded to other minorities increased and the number awarded to Whites stayed roughly the same, the number awarded to American Blacks dropped from 1,116 to 828. And Blacks needed more time to get those degrees.¹
- Racism is so integral a part of American life that no matter what Blacks do to better their lot, they are doomed to fail so long as the majority of Whites do not see that their own well-being is threatened by the inferior status of Blacks.²
- Fifty-three percent of nonblacks believe that African-Americans are less intelligent than whites; 51% believe they are less patriotic; 56% believe they are more violence-prone; 62% believe they are more likely to "prefer to live on welfare" and less likely to "prefer to be self-supporting."

From a 1990 survey of the University of Chicago's
National Opinion Research Center³

- Black Males have the lowest life expectancy of any group in the United States. Their unemployment rate is more than twice that of white males; even black men with college degrees are three times more likely to be unemployed than

¹ The Atlantic Monthly April 1992 - Article by Claude M. Steele

² Faces at the Bottom of the Well by Derrick Bell

³ RACE by Studs Terkel

SUPPORT DATA FOR H.B. #2543

their white counterparts. About one in four black men between the ages of twenty and twenty nine is behind bars. Blacks receive longer prison terms than whites who have committed the same crimes.³

Suicide is the third leading cause of death for young black males. Since 1960, suicide rates for young black males have nearly tripled, and doubled for black females. While suicide among whites increases with age, it is a particularly youthful phenomenon among blacks.³

Many black males die prematurely from twelve major preventable diseases. Nearly one-third of all black families live below the poverty line. Half of all black children are born in poverty and will spend all their youth growing up in poor families.

From a 1991 report of the 21st Century Commission on African-American Males³

March 20, 1994

Senator Al Rameriz
Room 531, North
State Capitol Building
Topeka, Kansas 66612


Honorable Rameriz:

On behalf of the African-American Community, we, the Concerned Citizens for Equal Justice, support House Bill 2543 as written. Today, many of our young African-American males are faced with a future of illiteracy, unemployment, and/or imprisonment. The probability of a large number of African-American males ever heading a household and becoming a productive, tax-paying citizen is null and void. This is just one example of the many complex problems facing our community.

Passage of Bill 2543 would allow African-Americans to develop programs to focus on the immediate family needs in improving the basic quality of life through better health care, education, employment, and housing.

We are asking for the support of the Committee in passing this Bill.

Sincerely,


Lontena Gentry, Chairperson
Concerned Citizens for Equal Justice
2401 Kentucky
Topeka, Kansas 66605

*Senate Gov. Org.
Attachment 7
3/22/94*