

February20, 2012

Testimony in favor of HB 2450
House Commerce and Economic Development Committee
Chairman- Representative Anthony Brown

Good Morning Mr. Chairman and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today in support of HB-2450.

The Kansas Small and Disadvantaged Business Development Act will create a business program within the Kansas Department of Commerce that reaches out to small, women, and minority owned businesses. A business owner will then be given an opportunity to participate in state and post-secondary education institution contracts for goods and services.

Numerous studies have shown that small businesses, women and minorities have been deeply affected by the economic recession. While women make up more than 50 percent of the Kansas population, there are currently fewer than 60,000 female-owned businesses in our state. Even fewer have a person of color at the helm – of the 237,000 small businesses in Kansas, just 14,000 are owned by a minority.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Kansas women earn only 75 cents for every \$1 earned by their male counterparts. Hispanic women earn 86 cents for every dollar earned by a man of the same race, while African-American women earn just 85 cents compared to African-American men. Both women and minorities continue to trail in wages earned.

This Act will help eliminate a real gap and make it easier for women, minorities and small business owners to find new business ventures that will result in more employment opportunities. I believe, that small businesses are the foundation of our nation and we must help them grow and sustain small businesses in the state of Kansas.

Thank you for your time and consideration of House Bill 2450.

Senator Oletha Faust-Goudeau
Kansas State Senate – 29th District