

HB 2113

Support Testimony: Written Only

For the meeting on Thursday, February 17

Testimony by: Stacey Knoell, Executive Director

On behalf of: Kansas African American Affairs Commission

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My name is Stacey Knoell, and I am the Executive Director of the Kansas African American Affairs Commission. This is submitted with the enthusiastic support of HB2113, establishing an Asian-American Pacific Islanders Commission.

The KAAAC is currently one of five external entities that advocate for, and address state policy needs for respective communities in Kansas. The groups currently represented in an official capacity by the State of Kansas include African Americans, Hispanic and Latinos, individuals with disabilities, Native Americans, and individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

From time to time someone asks me why there is a need for an African American Affairs Commission. The simple truth is that the needs of the African American community can be overlooked. The Commission's guidance on policy areas reduces potential blind spots and ensures all Kansans are represented. Like the Kansas African American Affairs Commission, the AAPI commission would fill a much-needed role in ensuring that the voices of marginalized communities are represented in the highest-level discussions in this state.

Please vote in support of establishing an Asian American Pacific Islander Commission.