

**KANSAS SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SENATE BILL 305**

May 18, 2015

MATT CONDON, CEO, BARDAVON HEALTH INNOVATIONS

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Chairman Masterson and Members of the Committee:

I am the CEO for Bardavon Health Innovations, a startup in Overland Park, Kansas. This is my second startup in the healthcare and biosciences sectors in Kansas. I was fortunate enough to build, grow and sell my first Kansas startup company, ARC (Athletic Rehabilitation Centers), just last year after building it from a one-person operation to over 100 employees in just a few years. I am here today to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 305 and ask you to work to preserve the Kansas Bioscience Authority (KBA), its funding, autonomy, and the opportunities it provides to startups like mine.

The Kansas Bioscience Authority serves as a critical component to the growth of the bioscience industry for the State of Kansas. When the KBA was created through the Kansas Economic Growth Act, it was truly ahead of its time and the envy of many states across the country. Where other organizations provide grants, research, lobbying, and very early stage capital, the KBA is one of few that provides true “growth capital” to bioscience companies in the region. Growth capital is what these companies need as the road to growth in the bioscience sector is often a long one. But, the payoff is worth it. The average annual wage of a Kansas employee in the biosciences is \$70,000, compared with \$40,000 in non-bioscience jobs. These types of high-paying jobs should be the ones Kansas leaders want to attract and maintain.

KBA investments also fuel capital expenditures, spur outside grants, and encourage private capital investments in Kansas bioscience companies. Again, I believe attracting outside capital should be an important goal for Kansas leaders who are working to position Kansas as a vibrant place for business. The passage of SB 305 will not only limit future outside capital, it will hurt the attraction of bioscience intellectual property from national and international pipelines.

The KBA is wisely structured as a public-private partnership operating apart from state government. This signals to entrepreneurs and business leaders that Kansas approaches its bioscience growth on a professional basis, with an understanding of business realities, and shielded from the often uncertain politics that underlie many other economic development programs.

The KBA is focused on the industry sectors where Kansas has demonstrated strength including agribusiness, animal health, human health, and life sciences tech. The KBA has been vital in positioning Kansas at the forefront of these sectors that are leading economic growth in the 21st Century. This sector is critical to Kansas economic and job growth and SB 305 will drive a stake into our progress and future opportunity in this sector. I respectfully ask you to vote in opposition to SB 305 and keep Kansas competitive in this key sector of our economy.

Contact:

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