

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 1806

A RESOLUTION designating March 26, 2014, as Equity Day at the Capitol.

WHEREAS, The Kansas African American Affairs Commission (KAAAC) is an agency of the State of Kansas, established in 1997 by action of the legislature and approved by the Governor and derives its authority from K.S.A. 74-9901 through 74-9906; and

WHEREAS, The Kansas African American Affairs Commission, a bi-partisan board of seven appointees representing four congressional districts along with their Executive Director and staff, serves as a conduit for legislation, policy, programs and research to address concerns of the African American community in the State of Kansas; and

WHEREAS, The duties and responsibilities of the KAAAC are to: Act as advisors to the Governor of Kansas; gather and disseminate information and conduct hearings, conferences and special studies on problems and programs concerning African Americans; coordinate, assist and cooperate with the efforts of the state departments and agencies to draft and implement legislation to serve the needs of African Americans, especially in the areas of culture, education, employment, health, housing, welfare and recreation; develop, coordinate and assist other public and private associations and organizations with understanding the problems of African Americans; develop, coordinate and assist other public and private associations and organizations to provide services to African Americans; propose new programs and legislation concerning African Americans; evaluate existing programs and proposed legislation concerning African Americans; stimulate public awareness of the concerns and problems of African Americans by conducting a program of public education; conduct training programs for community leadership and service project staff; accept contributions to assist in the effectuation of the KAAAC and seek and enlist the cooperation of private, charitable, religious, labor, civic and benevolent organizations; solicit, receive and expend federal funds and enter into contracts and agreements with any federal agency; and establish advisory committees on special projects; and

WHEREAS, In 2010, KAAAC developed an instrument, entitled the State of African Americans in Kansas, which was designed to measure equity and mobilize communities through the selection and use of included evidence-based practice solutions to work in concert with the KAAAC to improve Kansas. This instrument is now in its third year of development; and

WHEREAS, Findings in this report have allowed the Commission to mobilize equity advisory boards to work in concert with Commissioners in each district to design and develop initiatives targeting health and safe communities, schools and educational opportunity, economic opportunity and asset building, civic leadership and advocacy, and criminalization and social justice; and

WHEREAS, Last year's report found African Americans in Kansas earned a median income of \$31,959 and attained an average ACT score of 17.8. Caucasian Americans in Kansas earned a median income of \$50,458 and attained an average ACT score of 22.5. Only 49.3% of African Americans in Kansas registered to vote, compared to 70.4% of Caucasian Americans in Kansas. Yet only 32.3% of African Americans in Kansas actually vote, compared to 48.8% of Caucasian Americans; and

WHEREAS, African Americans in Kansas have an unemployment rate double that of the state average. 25.1% of African American adults live below the poverty line, compared to 10.6% of Caucasian American adults. 34% of African American children live below the poverty line, compared to 12.8% of Caucasian American children. African American mothers who are twenty years and older with 12 years of education have children with an infant mortality rate of 20.35%; and

WHEREAS, At all levels of contact with Corrections and Juvenile Justice, inequities exist; initial contact, reason for arrest, length of sentence, severity of charge, discharge status, family home or state funded facility and length of time on probation; and

WHEREAS, The third Annual Equity Day at the Capitol is being held today to highlight the plan and research of the Commission, to celebrate the programming and work of the KAAAC district-wide Equity Advisory boards and to advocate for the reduction in inequity within the areas of criminalization and social justice: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas: That members of the Kansas Black Legislative Caucus commend the Commission on the work that they do to improve the lives of African Americans residing in Kansas and the collaborative nature by which they seek to develop and continue improving the State of Kansas; and

Be it further resolved: That this legislative body appropriately pause to commend this august group of individuals for their work and hereby designate March 26, 2014, as Equity Day at the Kansas State Capitol 2014; and

Be it further resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate shall send one enrolled copy of this resolution to each of the following KAAAC Commissioners: Daphne Maxwell, District 1; Chairperson Chiquita Coggs and C. Patrick Woods, District 2; Tyron Garner, District 3; James Barfield, Sherdeill Brethett and James Elmore, District 4, who also serve as members of the District 4 Equity Advisory Board. The Secretary of the Senate shall also send one enrolled copy of this resolution to each of the following Equity Advisory Board Chairs: Dr. Hence Parson, District 1; Mrs. Yasmari Rodriguez, District 2; and Ms. Rosalyn Brown, of WYCO, and Mrs. Virginia Sewing Ret, of JOCO, District 3. The Secretary of the Senate shall also send one enrolled copy of this resolution to each member of the African American Council of Elders: Presiding Elder Francis Calloway, Tasleem Muqtasid, Vada Bowen, Janet Diggs, Wakeelah Martinez, Carla Jackson-Patton and Terrill Forest. The Secretary of the Senate shall also send one enrolled copy of this resolution to Dr. Mildred Edwards, Executive Director of the KAAAC; Andrea Scipio, KAAAC Equity Project Director; and Zetta Sims, President of the McAdams Golden Age Club.

Senate Resolution No. 1806 was sponsored by Senators Oletha Faust-Goudeau and David Haley.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the SENATE, and was adopted by that body

President of the Senate.

Secretary of the Senate.