

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

From: Shawn Mitchell, President and Chief Executive Officer
Community Bankers Association of Kansas

Date: January 27, 2015

RE: Written Support for Senate Bill No. 38

Chairman King and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am Shawn Mitchell, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Community Bankers Association of Kansas (CBA). CBA is a statewide trade association for locally owned and operated community banks. CBA member banks are as diverse as Kansas itself, as varied as the economies and the aspirations of the communities we serve. Our business depends on building and maintaining personal relationships with our customers, supporting other small businesses that in turn provide jobs, services and help our communities prosper. We believe passionately in the vital importance of our community banks in Kansas.

I am providing this written testimony today on behalf of CBA member community banks in support of the Kansas Bankers Association, and others, for passage of Senate Bill 38. Our banks are independent businesses and place great value on the ability of private business to innovate and grow for the benefit of owners, shareholders, and our communities. We value the legal protections that allow business, particularly technology businesses, to innovate under the legitimate patent protection process. We also believe there must be a careful balance between the free operation of business and protections of resources and investments as well as the public.

We support Senate Bill 38 because it seeks to preserve good faith efforts to retain the values of patent law while at the same time provide some means of protecting business from abuse of the patent system. Senate Bill 38 is based on long and careful research of legislation passed in other states. It is true the issue of patent infringement abuse has been greater in other states, and there are a variety of issues that need to be addressed as they were raised during the interim study by the Joint Interim Committee of the Judiciary. CBA believes that addressing this issue now, based on the experiences in other states and in cooperation with all parties, is a good preemptive goal as the issue begins to appear in Kansas.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Senate Bill 38