



**Committee on Federal and State Affairs**

**Testimony SB 399**

**February 15, 2012**

**LULAC supports the Kansas Business-Workers-Communities Partnership Act**

Mr. Chair and honorable members of the committee, my name is Elias L. Garcia and I am the State Director of the Kansas League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) is the oldest and largest Latino civil rights organization in the United States and its mission is to advance the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, health and civil rights of Hispanic Americans through community-based programs operating at more than 1000 councils nationwide.

After canvassing Hispanic and Latino leaders in communities from Liberal, Dodge and Garden City, Wichita, Salina, Topeka, KC and throughout Kansas, today I come before this honorable committee to lend our **support to SB399, the Kansas Business-Workers-Communities Partnership Act.**

LULAC is pleased to support SB399 because LULAC , both at the National and state levels, supports economic development initiatives that will promote the economic well being of our communities, especially in Kansas.

In these uncertain and unstable economic times, SB399 provides a common sense vehicle to addressing the most fundamental and basic need of both business and members of our local communities. SB399 is a Win-Win economic development initiative that seeks partnership between government, business, and community stakeholders, bringing together in common sense fashion parties that simply cannot succeed without each other--those who need work and those who need workers.

Mr. Chair, LULAC understands that SB399 is not without controversy, a bill of this nature will most certainly bring all the cynics and naysayers out of the woodwork, but the facts are simple, Kansas needs the business community to be successful and in order to so, the business community needs workers.

All the above notwithstanding, we must also recognize another important fact-- that there is still much work to be done in realizing SB399 (including gaining the support of other significant partners such as Homeland Security, etc.) Evenso, Honorable members of the committee, at the end of the day SB 399 is "do-able" and it goes without saying that we all have the extraordinary opportunity to make it happen—IF—we come together to support the economic well-being of Kansas.

In closing, I again state that SB 399 is not and should not be viewed as anything more than what it is i.e. a common sense approach to supporting the needs of those entities that serve as fuel and engine to Kansas economic development. LULAC strongly urges your support for this visionary bill that seeks to advance and promote the economic well being of all Kansans.