



INDEPENDENCE
INCLUSION
INNOVATION

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TO: Representative Sean Tarwater and
Members of the House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee

FR: Matt Fletcher, Executive Director, InterHab

RE: Support for SB 333

Chairman Tarwater and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to share testimony in support of Senate Bill 333. Persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) comprise the most underutilized pool of labor in existence today. In fact, the chances of a person with a disability being unemployed are more than double that of their counterparts in the general labor pool. The Kansas State Use Law facilitates meaningful work opportunities for persons with IDD. The Kansas State Use law is incredibly important to thousands of Kansans with IDD. It requires that State-funded entities such as State agencies, the regents and school districts purchase items made by Kansans with disabilities.

The Kansas State Use Law has been on the books for decades. Beginning in the early 2000's, an effort was made to quell long-standing conflicts between State Use Law vendors and purchasers. The result of that effort was the formation of the State Use Law Committee, an oversight body that has served for two decades as a mechanism for improvement of relations between parties to the State Use Law as well as establishing needed processes for ensuring better outcomes on behalf of persons with IDD who participate.

I had the honor of being appointed to the State Use Law Committee by Governor Kathleen Sebelius in 2005 and serving as Chair of the Committee from 2006 to 2012. I can tell you that, based on such first-hand experience, the State Use Law Committee has provided a very valuable service to the State of Kansas, and to Kansans with IDD, throughout its tenure.

SB 333 removes the sunset provision for the State Use Law Committee. Given the Committee's long track record of successful outcomes, I believe it is time to allow the Committee to continue in its role in perpetuity. As such, I respectfully request your support of SB 333 when considered by this Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide supportive testimony on SB 333. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance regarding this matter.