



Date: January 25, 2023

Bill number: SB39

Proponent testimony on Behalf of the Kansas African American Legislative Caucus

Chairman Thompson and Members of the Committee,

I am honored to submit testimony in support of the mural honoring the 1st Kansas (Colored) Voluntary Infantry regiment. The regiment was made up of freed slaves, free African Americans, and white officers. It was the first black regiment to be organized in a northern state and the first black unit to see combat during the Civil War. They bravely fought for the Union during the Civil War. They faced not only the enemy on the battlefield, but also the discrimination and racism of the time. Despite this, they persevered and made a significant contribution to the war effort. Colonel James Monroe Williams who was the commanding officer of the regiment stated "I never saw such fighting as was done by the Negro regiment, the question that negroes will fight is settled; besides they make better soldiers in every respect than any troops I have ever had under my command."

This mural will serve as a reminder of their sacrifices and their place in our state & nation's history. It is a powerful symbol of strength, courage, and the ongoing struggle for equality. I fully support its creation and placement in a prominent location where all can see and appreciate it.

Brad Boyd

Representative 49th District

Secretary-KS African American Legislative Caucus