



Date: March 19, 2024

To: Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation
Senator Caryn Tyson, Chair

From: Alex Orel, Senior Vice President – Government Relations
Kansas Bankers Association

Re: SB 494 – Written Proponent Testimony

Chairman and committee members, I am Alex Orel, and I am submitting proponent testimony on behalf of the Kansas Bankers Association (KBA). I am also pleased to submit this testimony on behalf of my colleague Kelly VanZwoll, our Vice President – Government Relations & Staff Attorney. We look forward to being a resource for you and the committee for the remainder of this legislative session. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on SB 494.

Kansas Bankers Association Background Information:

The KBA was founded in 1887 and is a voluntary, non-profit trade association governed by its membership. The KBA is headquartered in Topeka, Kansas, and is led by our 24-member board of directors. The KBA staff, which President/CEO Doug Wareham leads, includes 40 professionals, including 13 attorneys, that provide services to Kansas bankers ranging from legislative advocacy to educational training to insurance services to legal and regulatory compliance support. Our mission statement is direct:

"Together, we support our member banks and bankers with leadership, advocacy, and education to benefit the communities and customers they serve."

KBA's membership includes 98% of the headquartered banks in Kansas. Our membership also includes 20 out-of-state commercial banks operating in Kansas. Our member banks employ more than 21,000 Kansans who provide financial services in every county across the state. While our member banks range in assets from the smallest to the largest in our state, each member bank that belongs to the KBA has one vote on policy positions adopted by either our general membership or our Board of Directors. One member, one vote.



SB 494— Proponent Testimony

The proposed bill, SB 494, presents a significant opportunity to foster financial inclusivity and support adoption initiatives across Kansas. This legislation would enable any individual to establish an adoption savings account within a financial institution, specifically designated to cover eligible expenses associated with adoption proceedings, including reasonable fees for legal and professional services.

The Kansas Bankers Association (KBA) has consistently supported financial initiatives aimed at encouraging financial planning and addressing the needs of individuals statewide. We firmly believe that facilitating and incentivizing Kansans to save for adoption expenses represents another invaluable tool in our collective efforts to overcome challenges and barriers to adoption.

As an industry with a presence in every county throughout Kansas, we are eager to actively engage in this endeavor alongside our customers. By providing accessible financial solutions tailored to the unique needs of adoptive families, we can play a pivotal role in supporting their journey towards expanding their families through adoption.

We sincerely appreciate your time and attention to this matter. As the Committee deliberates on SB 494, we respectfully urge favorable consideration for its passage.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony and if you have questions or require additional information later, please get in touch with me at aorel@ksbankers.com or (785) 232-3444.