

My name is Kathy Lobb. I work for the Self Advocate Coalition of Kansas. I would like to say thank you for having this hearing on Rosa's law today. You may have heard about Rosa Marcellino on the news. She is a young woman with Down Syndrome who championed bills similar to HB 2644 in both the state of Maryland and the US Congress. Rosa's law passed in congress in 2010. SACK is here today to ask that the word mental retardation not be used in the state of Kansas ever again. Many of our self advocates don't like that word. We are people with developmental and intellectual disabilities. We don't like the r word at all. The r word has been used to make people with intellectual disabilities feel bad' it has been used to lock us up in institutions and take our rights away from us. SACK represents 27 groups across Kansas. At our meetings we all voted that we don't like this term and want to change it to one that respects us as people. We want our statutes and regulations to use language that represents us as people who may need supports but are also strong and capable. The SACK groups would like for me to tell you and the other members of the House that it is not right to continue to use this old and hurtful terminology. I am asking you to use the wording that is included in Substitute Senate bill 397 to make sure that everything in this bill matches up with other state and federal laws. I am here today to ask you all to pass an amended bill for 2644. We self advocates are asking for this for many reasons: but most importantly you should pass it because we are people too.

Sincerely

Kathy Lobb