

**STATE OF KANSAS**



**Senator Elaine Bowers  
District 36**

**Federal and State Affairs Testimony  
in Support of SB39  
January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

Thank you for your time today to testify in support of SB39. This bill would require the Capitol Preservation Committee to develop and approve plans to place a mural in the Capitol honoring the 1st Kansas (Colored) Voluntary Infantry Regiment. No money is requested in this bill and SB39 would prohibit public funding from being expended to finance the creation or installation of the mural.

Also in SB39, the Secretary of Administration would be authorized to receive donations as specified in the bill. All donations would be credited to the 1st Kansas (Colored) Voluntary Infantry Regiment Mural Fund, which the bill would establish. Expenditures from the 1st Kansas (Colored) Voluntary Infantry Regiment Mural Fund would be for the creation and installation of the mural.

The Final Report of the committee can be found at KLRD Policy Areas, Publication and Committee page. Click on other task forces, commissions and committees and find Capitol Preservation Committee. There you can also view the minutes, agenda, and final report. The Committee recommends that a legislator introduce legislation to authorize the installation of a mural honoring the 1st Kansas Colored Voluntary Infantry Regiment. The Committee has also approved the creation of a subcommittee for the mural. An in-depth review by Melissa Renick, KLRD Assistant Director for Research can be found from the October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022 minutes outlining the timeline of this project dating back to 2000 (SB660). It certainly seems far past the time to finish this mural and SB39 is the first step in the Senate to start the process.

We have a few guests with us today I'd like to introduce, Chairperson of the Capitol Preservation Committee Patrick Zollner and the Interim Executive Director of the Kansas Museum of History and Frank Burham with the Department of Administration. Patrick will testify as the chair of the committee and Frank is here to answer questions as the "boots on the ground" person.

I'm happy to answer questions the committee may have and introduce Patrick to the committee as the Chairman. As you all might remember our friend Jennie Chenn passed away

unexpectedly during session last year. She had been the Chair of the Capitol Preservation Committee for many years and Patrick has stepped in to lead the committee. He is the historian who can answer questions about the 1<sup>st</sup> Kansas Colored Voluntary Infantry Regiment and their important part in Kansas history.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elaine Bowers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'E'.

Elaine Bowers

Just a brief history of the Capitol Preservation Committee - it was created by the Kansas Legislature in 2010 to approve renovation proposals in all areas of the Capitol, the Capitol Visitor Center, and the Capitol grounds to ensure the historical beauty of the areas are preserved, preserve the proper decor of those areas, assure that any art or artistic displays are historically accurate and have historic significance, approve the location and types of temporary displays, and oversee the reconfiguration or redecoration of committee rooms within the Capitol. As provided by KSA 2016 Supp. 75-2269, the Division of Legislative Administrative Services has the responsibility of implementing the recommendations of the Committee. The Committee is made up of 12 members, with the Governor appointing 3, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House each appointing 2, and the Minority Leaders of the House and Senate each appointing 1. The Committee's three ex officio members are the Statehouse Architect, the Executive Director of the State Historical Society, and the Director of the Creative Arts Industries Commission. The Governor has the authority to appoint the chairperson from the Committee's membership. Current membership of the committee is listed below:

**Chairperson:** Patrick Zollner

**Senate**

Sen. Chase Blasi

Sen. Elaine Bowers

**House**

Rep. Fred Patton

Rep. Valdenia Winn

**Non-Legislative Members**

Frank Burnam

Melinda Gaul

Tim Graham

Kate Van Steenhuyse

Will Lawrence

Sharon Wenger

Larry Wolgast