

KANSAS STATE USE LAW USAGE REPORT
July 2009 to June 2011

Since the 1950's, Kansas public policy has been that state agencies, state universities and Unified School District's (USD's) purchase products manufactured by blind and disabled Kansas citizens as a means for creating employment opportunities for these Kansans that otherwise may not exist. This public policy is set out in K.S.A. 75-3317 *et seq.* and is known as the Kansas State Use Law (SUL).

In 2004, several Kansas SUL Vendors (those who employ blind and disabled Kansans) joined together to form the Coalition for Opportunity (Coalition). Members of the Coalition committed themselves to updating and improving the existing SUL program for both vendors and required purchasers. In 2005, the Coalition successfully lobbied the Kansas Legislature to update the law as well as create a SUL oversight committee comprised of legislators, purchasers, vendors and a consumer representative. After updating the law, the SUL program saw a steady growth in the volume of sales as well as improvements in the relationships between required state purchasers and SUL vendors.

Collectively, the SUL vendors report employing over 400 blind and disabled Kansans, many who were afforded their first opportunity to earn a competitive wage, obtain access to health benefits and sustain viable employment because of the opportunities created by the SUL program. In addition, even more blind and disabled persons are helped by the dollars reinvested in the missions of the SUL not-for-profit employers. Without the Kansas SUL program and the accommodated work environments established by the SUL vendors, very few employment opportunities would exist for these blind and disabled Kansan citizens.

Part of the reform measures passed during the 2005 Legislative Session, requires that the SUL vendors prepare an annual report that summarizes the volume of sales for each SUL product or service sold as well as a summary of waivers requested and issued. In addition, the report highlights the activity of the SUL Committee as well as vendors efforts to grow the program. Below is the report submitted on behalf of the 2009-2011 SUL Vendors.

2009-2011 SUL Usage Report Highlights

- ✓ SUL Committee has continued to meet and look for opportunities to grow the SUL program.
- ✓ In FY '09 TARC qualified as a vendor for the SUL program. TARC serves the Topeka area. No new SUL vendors were qualified in FY '11.
- ✓ SUL Committee established a time-line for the production of the SUL Catalog. This has simplified the process for both the Director of Purchases and the SUL vendors. In addition to the printed catalog, SUL vendors have also established an electronic catalog and a website where purchasers may locate and purchase products electronically. The website can be accessed at www.ksstatelaw.org.
- ✓ During this reporting period, the sales within program saw a decline. In FY '10, SUL maintained its level of sales totaling \$7.56 million. However, in FY '11, SUL dropped to \$6.98 million, which is one of the lowest amounts since the program sales have been tracked. The highest sales recorded for the SUL program was in FY '07 when it reached \$7.87 million.
- ✓ SUL vendors, with the assistance of the Director of Purchases, continued to sell their products through the state's contract for office supplies. This arrangement has made the SUL program more accessible for all state purchasers and has streamlined the purchasing of SUL products for many required purchasers. During this report period, the state contractor accounted for almost \$500,000 in FY '10 and \$427,000 in FY '11.
- ✓ In both FY '10 and FY '11, Kansas Regents accounted for roughly 30% of SUL sales while USD's account for 16%. The remaining sales can be roughly attributed at 41% for sales to State agencies and the remaining 13% SUL sales are from other sources.
- ✓ Cartridge King has the highest sales in the SUL vendor in the program. In FY '10 they accounted for 54% of all SUL sales and 53% in FY '11.