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Partners in America's Poverty Fighting Network

Testimony Before the Senate Commerce Committee
Scott Anglemyer, Executive Director, Kansas Association of Community Action Programs
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Chairperson Lynn and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today regarding SB 168. My name is Scott Anglemyer, and I am the executive director of the Kansas Association of Community Action Programs (KACAP). KACAP is the membership association for Community Action Agencies in Kansas that are working to create economic opportunity and end poverty in their communities. Our member agencies work to better focus local, state, private, and federal resources to assist low-income individuals and families become more self-sufficient. Together, our agencies provide services to over 21,000 low-income Kansans each year. The services KACAP members deliver cover a wide range of areas, including employment, education, meeting emergency basic needs, nutrition, money management, counseling, and housing.

KACAP does not have an opinion on the need for a licensing process for home inspectors in general, and therefore our testimony on this bill is neutral. However, we have concerns that the bill as written may affect KACAP member agencies in ways that the Legislature does not intend.

Our primary area of concern involves the federally-funded Weatherization Assistance Program, which some KACAP member agencies operate. Through this program they perform energy-saving work on hundreds of dwelling units each year. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), which administers the program nationally and the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC), require that weatherization agencies conduct rigorous pre- and post-inspections of homes to be weatherized under the program. The scope of these inspections would meet the definition of "home inspection" listed in Section 2(d)(1) of Senate Bill 168.

Weatherization inspectors must already meet strict standards. DOE requires that inspectors hold two certifications. The highly technical Energy Auditor certification is required for personnel

KACAP Member Agencies and Board of Directors

Community Action, Inc.

East Central Kansas Economic Opportunity Corp.

Economic Opportunity Foundation

Harvest America Corp.

Mid-Kansas Community Action Program

Northeast Kansas Community Action Program

Southeast Kansas Community Action Program

Wichita Sedgwick County Community Action Partnership

conducting pre-inspections for determining what weatherization measures need to be performed. To receive the Energy Auditor certification, an inspector must demonstrate a knowledge of building systems and performance, infiltration and exfiltration, combustion appliances, and other areas. The Quality Control Inspector (QCI) certification is required for those doing a post-inspection to determine whether work was done correctly, and requires knowledge of health and safety, construction techniques, assessing client satisfaction, and some of the technical areas of building performance that are also required of Energy Auditors.

It is unclear to us whether the intent of SB 168 was to include individuals such as weatherization inspectors. While the bill carves out a number of exceptions, it is not clear to KACAP and its member agencies whether weatherization inspectors would fall within those exceptions.

Because these inspectors already have to meet rigorous certification requirements, we believe that additional licensing requirements are unnecessary. For this reason, we ask that when the committee marks up this bill, it consider clarifying that the bill's provisions do not apply to weatherization inspectors.