

House Concurrent Resolution No. 28

93RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2120L.011

1 **Whereas**, the Housing Authority of Kansas City (HAKC) was created on July 14,
2 1941, by city ordinance and mayorial appointment of a five-member Board of Commissioners
3 in accordance with Missouri enabling legislation; and
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5 **Whereas**, a public housing agency is a governmental or public body that is
6 authorized by the State to engage in or assist in the development or operation of housing for low-
7 income families. Public housing programs are managed by a variety of organizations: housing
8 agencies, local government departments, nonprofit organizations, and private property managers,
9 with the public housing agency acting as the landlord; and
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11 **Whereas**, the mission of the Housing Authority of Kansas City is to develop,
12 rehabilitate, and manage decent, safe, and sanitary quality affordable housing in a manner that
13 promotes equal opportunity, fair housing, and the deconcentration of race and poverty; and
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15 **Whereas**, in the beginning, HAKC provided housing for returning veterans in the
16 1940s, with the program later expanded to include low-rent units for families, and by 1965 the
17 HAKC rental inventory totaled some 2200 units; and
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19 **Whereas**, as federal policies shifted, HAKC also reoriented its activities. In 1967
20 and 1968, 200 units were leased from private owners for sublease to HAKC tenants under a rent-
21 supplement program. From 1968 to 1970, 50 foreclosed single-family homes were purchased
22 from the Federal Housing Administration and the Veterans Administration by the HAKC for
23 lease to public housing tenants; and
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25 **Whereas**, in the 1970s proposals from developers for turnkey housing were

26 requested, and the rehabilitation and modernization of existing structures became a priority for
27 HAKC. For the next decade, a succession of executive directors oversaw the Authority. Tenants
28 became dissatisfied with the condition of what were formerly well-maintained units and sued in
29 1993 in federal court to hasten the rehabilitation of one of the older developments; and
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31 **Whereas**, in 1994, the Housing Authority of Kansas City faced daunting and
32 formidable challenges so serious that the agency was placed in federal court receivership, with
33 the agency's housing stock largely distressed and obsolete as evidenced by a 43% vacancy rate,
34 enormous backlogs of uncompleted maintenance work, rampant criminal activity, and hundreds
35 of families living in dangerous, substandard conditions; and
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37 **Whereas**, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
38 (HUD) declared the HAKC a "troubled agency", based on its score of less than 44% under the
39 national Public Housing Management Assessment Program; and
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41 **Whereas**, today, HAKC operations and the majority of its properties have
42 undergone a dramatic and near complete makeover. HAKC's vacancy rate now averages
43 approximately 2%, maintenance requests are addressed promptly, and crime rates within public
44 housing are down by 44%. In 1998, HUD designated HAKC as a "high performer" agency; and
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46 **Whereas**, since 1994, HAKC has focused intensive efforts to rebuild distressed
47 communities and to expand the supply of quality affordable housing in Kansas City, Missouri.
48 Several public housing developments, such as Guinotte Manor, Riverview Gardens, and Theron
49 B. Watkins, have been transformed into vibrant new mixed-income communities that serve as
50 the centerpieces of their respective urban neighborhoods, and the beautiful townhouses and
51 streetscapes of Villa del Sol occupy a site that a few years ago consisted of bombed out buildings
52 and empty streets; and
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54 **Whereas**, in addition, HAKC has helped address the critical housing affordability
55 issues faced by community residents through implementation of over 3,000 new Section 8
56 vouchers, which allow participants to lease housing units from private landlords allowing

57 participants to have a greater choice in where they live; and
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59 **Whereas**, by 2003, HAKC had received numerous awards from national, regional,
60 and local organizations which symbolize HAKC's continued success in constructing safe, quality
61 housing for low-income residents, pioneering the rehabilitaiton and revitalizaiton of Kansas
62 City's urban core housing, and communicating those achievements to its clients and the public.
63 The awards received by HAKC include:

64
65 (1) The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's "New Face of
66 America's Public Housing Award" which recognizes housing authorities, developers, and urban
67 designers for their efforts to replace outmoded housing projects with attractive, walkable, mixed-
68 income neighborhoods;

69
70 (2) The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials presented awards
71 for several of HAKC's print publications;

72
73 (3) The Historic Kansas City Foundation Award was received for two HAKC public
74 housing "scattered site" homes (quality single-family town homes, duplexes, and houses
75 scattered throughout the city) constructed in the historic Coleman Highlands neighborhood,
76 where HAKC took painstaking efforts to ensure the homes were a complement to the
77 neighborhood; and

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79 **Whereas**, after years of federal oversight, the Housing Authority of Kansas City
80 has taken steps toward resumption of local control. By 2003, a panel formed by the court-
81 appointed receiver had been working on how to make sure the agency doesn't become
82 dysfunctional again and in September 2002, the HAKC had a Board of Commissioners appointed
83 which will set policy for the Authority when court supervision comes to an end; and

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85 **Whereas**, while federal receivership was believed to be in its final stages by late
86 2003, today the Housing Authority of Kansas City is still under federal receivership and has not
87 fully transitioned to local control; and

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89 **Whereas**, the federal receivership of the HAKC has been overseen by Judge Dean

90 Whipple and Jeffrey K. Lines was the court-appointed receiver for eight years and now serves
91 as the HAKC special master with oversight responsibilities of the Board of Commissioners and
92 the HAKC. According to Mr. Lines, "we have witnessed a dramatic turnaround of the
93 agency...During Receivership, the Housing Authority of Kansas City improved its national
94 standing from a "troubled agency" to a "high performer" status in most key areas of performance
95 measurement", and in July 2003, Mr. Lines stated that the HAKC was "in the final stages of
96 Receivership", however, almost two years later the HAKC remains in federal receivership; and
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98 **Whereas**, while HAKC has experienced a complete turnaround in federal
99 receivership, it is vital that the Authority be under local control and allowed to set its own
100 policies to address current needs and problems as they arise, as evidence by recent events in the
101 Kansas City area regarding funding for the refurbishing of houses in the Historic Jazz District
102 in which HAKC has a limited ability to respond due to the restrictions of its federal receivership;
103 and
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105 **Whereas**, as a result of the significant and remarkable efforts of the Housing
106 Authority of Kansas City during receivership, the Authority has earned the right to be returned
107 to full local control and to set policies for the continued provision of quality, affordable housing
108 to low-income families in the Kansas City community:
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110 **Now, therefore, be it resolved** that the members of the House of
111 Representatives of the Ninety-third General Assembly, First Regular Session, the Senate
112 concurring therein, hereby urge Judge Dean Whipple to immediately end the federal receivership
113 of the Housing Authority of Kansas City initiated in 1994 and allow the Board of Commissioners
114 appointed to set policies for the Authority, thereby returning the HAKC to full local control; and
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116 **Be it further resolved** that the Chief Clerk of the Missouri House of
117 Representatives be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for Judge
118 Dean Whipple and each member of the Missouri Congressional Delegation.