From: Heru Amen-Ra
To: Public Testimony
Subject: Testimony on ordinances 250889 & 250890
Date: Tuesday, October 14, 2025 1:06:43 PM

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Heru Amen-Ra | Kansas City 4th District Resident

Public Testimony

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My name is Heru Amen-Ra, and I live here in Kansas City's 4th District.

I'm here to urge you to vote NO on ordinances 250889 and 250890, which would contract with Brown & Root Industrial Services — co-owned by KBR, the same military contractor that built Guantanamo Bay, where people were tortured and caged for decades without trial.

Kansas City doesn't need another jail — we need real investments in solutions that last. That means putting resources into affordable housing, access to health care (including mental health), and creating economic stability for people who might otherwise be caught up in the system.

Now, I speak as someone who's lived through this system. I spent over fifteen years in the Department of Corrections and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Inside, there were no real programs to help us understand the root causes of harm — no tools for transformation.

I had to decide to change on my own, but when I came home in 2019, I slipped back into the same survival patterns — selling drugs — until I found the Freedom Community Center in St. Louis.

That program trained me in restorative justice, helped me overcome addiction, provided housing and job support, and gave me purpose as a community organizer.

That’s what real safety looks like — healing, accountability, and opportunity, not cages and contracts.

Kansas City spends hundreds of millions on incarceration and policing but almost nothing on the programs that actually stop harm before it starts.

We don’t need a temporary jail; we need long-term investment in housing, healthcare, mental health, and jobs.

Do the right thing — vote NO on these ordinances and invest in people, not jails.

Thank you.