

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Steve Huebert at 3:30 p.m. on March 2, 2009, in Room 446-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Bob Bethell- excused
Representative Mike Peterson- excused

Committee staff present:

Ken Wilke, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Martha Dorsey, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Jill Shelley, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Florence Deeter, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Sue Storm, Legislative Coordinator, Kansas State Board of Education
Brad Bryant, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
Tom Stoffers and Richard Fry, November Patriots

Others attending:

See attached list.

Hearing on **SB 43 - State board of education; campaign contributions; limitations.**

Ken Wilke, Office of the revisor of Statutes, explained the intent of the bill is to allow an increase in the campaign contribution limit for candidates seeking a position on the State Board of Education. The current limit is \$500 per person or political committee; the bill would increase the amount to \$1,000. The Department of Education and the Secretary of State indicate there is no fiscal effect if the bill is passed.

Sue Storm, Legislative Coordinator, Kansas State Board of Education, spoke as a proponent of the bill and provided testimony, stating the expense of communicating with potential voters is quite large. She advocates following senatorial guidelines, which allows \$1,000 per political committee or person. Ms. Storm recommended the committee consider the bill favorable for passage (Attachment 1).

There being no opponents to **SB 43**, the hearing was closed.

Hearing on **SB 56 - Elections; security of advance voting ballots.**

Ken Wilke provided clarification of changes in the bill regarding the security of advanced ballot voting. He indicated there are certain restrictions surrounding the return of ballots to the county election office. A signature by the voter must accompany the returning ballot which is due at the county election office within two days; the bill requires the notation of the date as well as a signature.

Brad Bryant, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, testified in support of **SB 56**, saying the bill is designed to strengthen the security of advanced ballot voting by mail (Attachment 2). He outlined three basic concepts, provided additional comments on two sections of the bill, noted amendments made by the Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections, and recommended the bill favorable for passage.

Tom Stoffers, (in conjunction with Richard Fry), November Patriots, spoke as a concerned citizen on the issue of fraud in the election process. He said a significant number of illegal nationals are residing in Kansas and gave statistics, stating 50,000 drivers licenses have been issued to non-residents. He noted that every aspect of our voting system is based on an honor system and there is no mechanism for detecting fraud. Mr. Stoffers expressed concerns surrounding the advanced voting ballot and said the verification of a signature could be in question, and the use of undue influence upon the voter by a person collecting the ballot for return could also be problematic (Attachment 3).

Written only testimony submitted by Elizabeth Ensley, Shawnee County Election Commissioner is included (Attachment 4).

CONTINUATION SHEET

Minutes of the House Elections Committee at 3:30 p.m. on March 2, 2009, in Room 446-N of the Capitol.

There being no opponents to **SB 56**, the hearing was closed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2009.