

Senate Bill 171 Veto Message from the Governor

“This legislation contains a provision which I would be happy to sign into law, the opportunity for overseas and military voters to vote more easily. Allowing federal service voters to register and send ballots by e-mail will make it easier for more Kansans living abroad to participate. Fortunately, the Legislature still has time to send me these provisions in a clean bill before the 2010 elections.

“However, this legislation also contains provisions which will discourage advance voting, burdening the democratic process in Kansas. Last year, more than 70 percent of registered voters in Kansas participated in the Presidential election. During that election, as with all elections before it, there was no conclusive evidence of voter fraud in Kansas. Despite this lack of a problem, SB 171 seeks to find a solution by adding affidavits and signature lines to an already crowded return envelope for an advance ballot. These unnecessary hurdles will inevitably confuse voters and discourage many of them from voting.

“County election officials have suggested repeatedly that there is not conclusive evidence of voter fraud in Kansas. In fact, more and more Kansans are voting early; this is a trend we should be encouraging, not disrupting.

“Again, I look forward to working with the Legislature next session to sign into law legislation that involves more people in our democracy, without creating new and needless obstacles to the voting process.

“Therefore, pursuant to Article 2, Section 14 of the Constitution of the State of Kansas, I veto SB 171.”

Vetoed May 22, 2009

Signed Mark Parkinson