



KANSAS REPUBLICAN PARTY

February 5, 2015

Testimony in Support of:

HB 2214 HB 2211 HB 2212 HB 2182

HB 2214:

This Bill clears up three issues that have occurred in the last several years.

- (1) The addition of KSA 25-3902(a)(2) makes date of death “notice” for triggering the 21-day time period for the party replacement meeting. Previously if an elected official died, the Governor’s Office and Secretary of State lacked the specific authority, receipt of a resignation letter, to send notice letters to the appropriate county chair to start the 21-day period to have a replacement meeting and to start the period prescribed in KSA 25-3801 when no precinct leaders could be appointed by the county chair.
 - a. This prevents county chairs waiting extended periods of time for a notice letter directing them to have a replacement meeting
 - b. It also prevents county chairs from appointing additional precinct leaders after the death of an elected official and before the replacement meeting.
- (2) The supplement to KSA 25-3902(e) clarifies that political parties can make general rules concerning administrative matters for replacement meetings that are not covered in the statute but, by their nature, must be determined before the replacement meeting begins.
 - a. This prevents objections at the meeting regarding, for instance, how many proxy votes one person can carry.
- (3) The addition of 25-3902(h) clarifies that if a party’s **only** candidate withdraws in the period between the filing deadline and the primary election, the party will replace the candidate within 21 days and not be required to wait until the final canvass.
 - a. This permits the new candidate to fund raise during the primary cycle and have official status as the candidate.

HB 2211

This bill, by eliminating the element of “knowingly solicit” from KSA 25-4152a eliminates a source of significant confusion and frustration for candidates. Attempting to integrate the “knowingly solicit” concept in regards to contributions from PACs, lobbyists and other organizations to elected officials and candidates with modern social media has proved unworkable because the recipients have multiple on-line addresses; can opt-in to receiving social media communications without the sender’s knowledge; and can receive forwarded solicitations.

HB 2212

This bill supplements KSA 25-4143(i) and restores city party organizations. City parties were recognized in March 1908 with passage of the first law to regulate political parties. They were not included in the 1992 amendments that removed almost all state regulation of political parties.

In the Kansas Republican Party, the state party Constitution and Bylaws still contain provisions governing city parties. Two active city parties exist today, Gardner-Edgerton and Olathe, but are considered PACs and must follow the law applicable to PACs, not parties, including limits on coordination with candidates. One city party, Overland Park, went inactive, but its last officers still maintain the Bylaws. Several other city parties are informal organizations.

The benefit of city parties in large counties is that they provide a party organization, with an independent ability to take contributions and make expenditures at the local level, with the result that there will be more local involvement and participation in civic and political activity.

HB 2182

This bill amends KSA 25-4153a to permit recognized party committees to accept contributions during session.

Under current KSA 25-4153a(a)(6) recognized party committees are the only party committees limited in their ability to raise funds during the legislative session, unlike county, district or state party committees.

The change would affect only four organizations - (1) Senate Democrats Committee; (2) Kansans for a Democratic House; (3) Republican House Campaign Committee; and (4) Kansas Republican Senatorial Committee.

Recognized party committees perform the same core function as the other types of party committees, that is, they provide general support for all party candidates in their purview, and they operate statewide. They are not focused on a particular issue, industry, special interest, or individual candidate. They, therefore, should not have special limits placed on their fundraising that do not apply to other party committees.