

MINUTES OF THE Senate COMMITTEE ON Elections

The meeting was called to order by Senator Ronald R. Hein at
Chairperson

1:30 ~~am~~p.m. on January 24, 1983 in room 522-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator Edward F. Reilly, Jr.

Committee staff present:

Myrta Anderson, Research Department
Arden Ensley, Revisor of Statutes' Office
Sharon Green, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

John Polson, Wichita, Kansas
Helen Knetzer, Wichita, Kansas
Senator Billy McCray
Jon Josserand, Secretary of State's Office

The Chairman called the meeting to order.

Myrta Anderson explained the context of SB 29.

John Polson presented a map of Sedgwick County. He then introduced Helen Knetzer.

Helen Knetzer spoke of the unfairness in the appointment of County Election officials, that they should be elected. She spoke of the computer printouts and called them an invasion of privacy because of the phone numbers listed and the date of birth. She mentioned that voter registration needs to be simple. Helen Knetzer asked the committee to favorably pass SB 29.
(Attachment #1)

Questions were asked and a general discussion was held regarding date of birth and phone numbers listed on printout sheets. Senator Meyers asked what the statute said. Jon Josserand said that the dates and phone numbers are permissible, but statutes prohibit use of registration information for commercial purposes. Senator Gannon asked who makes the determination as to who would get the lists. Jon Josserand said that the Election Commissioner makes the determination.

John Polson discussed problems he felt Sedgwick County was having with voter registration and voting places in several precincts in Sedgwick County.

The Chairman indicated that there has to be no overlapping of any precincts, and that different political sub-divisions cannot be combined.

Senator Billy McCray passed out a statement regarding SB 29. (Attachment #2)
He also passed out some background material. (Attachment #3)

Senator McCray said that his is a philosophical argument. He said that if the officials were elected, the voters would have some influence to remove the officials from office.

Questions were asked and a general discussion was held regarding Senator McCray's statement.

Jon Josserand made comments on SB 29. (Attachment #4)

Questions were asked and a general discussion was held regarding SB 29.

Senator Johnston moved that the minutes of January 18 be approved. Senator Talkington seconded the motion. The motion was adopted.

The meeting was adjourned by the Chairman.

DIRECT ELECTION BY THE PEOPLE OF THE ELECTION COMMISSIONER IN THE FOUR LARGEST COUNTIES OF KANSAS

Mr. Chairman & Members of the Committee:

As a native of Kansas I have always been proud of the fact that Kansans have always believed in fairness, everyone having the same equal opportunities and rights. That when they see an area of injustice, unfairness or discrimination they have always acted to correct any inequity. We have an area existing in Kansas at the present time. The injustice, unfairness of not allowing the people of the four large metropolitan counties the opportunity of electing their election officer. Although as tax payers they pay the expenses and salaries of the election commissioner's office they have no voice as to whom the election commissioner is nor do they have any way of removing from office anyone they feel is not doing their job.. I firmly believe that the people of the larger counties are just as intelligent and capable as the people of the smaller counties in choosing the person responsible for conducting the elections in a county. (In smaller counties the county clerk is responsible) I also firmly believe that all election officers should be elected by direct vote of the people, as any person elected by the people I feel is more responsive to the people. The election commissioner's office in the four metropolitan counties must not be allowed to remain a "political football". How can a person in Topeka know what areas need to be corrected by the election commissioner of another county, other than possibly Shawnee County. I can speak only of personal knowledge of areas in Sedgwick County but some of those areas may also apply to other counties in the state. Townships and Second Class Cities need more precincts than their present number. There are some precincts in Wichita that are being forced to vote in voting places in townships outside the city limits which I believe to be a direct violation of our present election laws.

- Examples: (1) 23rd precinct of Ward VI (Wichita) voting in Gypsum Township about 5 miles away.
(2) 17th precinct of Ward VIII in a township 15 miles away

Att. h. 1

There needs to be some definite guide lines drawn up as to the size of precincts as they vary in size in Sedgwick County from three registered voters in the 17th precinct of the 8th Ward to 1943 registered voters in the second precinct of Rockford Township.

Computer print-outs. The election commissioner has refused to list telephone numbers as she says they are an invasion of privacy. I feel that telephone numbers are no more of an invasion of privacy as my birthdate is.

Voter registration. Although there has been some improvement in this area there is room for more. I have taken the training provided by the election office and am a deputy registrar. I have registered people in shopping centers and stores and have also gone door to door in voter registration request drives. I have found a lot of confusion when going door to door requesting people to feel out voter registration request cards. There is no reason why an election commissioner or county clerk could not advertise in the paper that there was going to be deputy registrars conducting a voter registration drive in a certain precinct or township on a certain day, during certain hours, thus eliminating the confusion of voter registration request cards. We must do everything possible to get people registered to vote, and get them to vote for voting is to me a very special right and privilege we have. I work with a young woman who has recently come from Poland to live in our state. One of her greatest desires is to become a citizen of our county and to register to vote. She says we must not take our voting rights for granted, for if we do we may become like her country, without any voting privileges. You as legislators of our state must do everything in your power to see that when areas of injustices, unfairness or discrimination are pointed out to you that you make every effort to correct them. So therefore, I would urge you to pass this bill out of committee for full consideration and debate by the entire Senate. Thank you.

Testimony of Senator Billy Q. McCray

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to appear before your Committee.

Senate Bill 29 is not a complicated piece of legislation. It may be a bit controversial but certainly not complicated. If passed, my bill will allow for the election commissioners of the four largest counties in our state to be elected by a popular vote of the people, rather than by appointment as they presently are.

County clerks act as the county election commissioners in all of the other 101 counties. They are elected as a part of the county ballot of officers. These election officers are accountable directly to the people of those counties and consequently respond to the desires of the majority of the registered voters of that county.

I believe that most citizens want to participate in government at whatever level they are able to. The elective process is the easiest and cheapest way to participate in government; and each time that we eliminate one or more county, state or federal officer from the elective process, we merely guarantee more government by appointed bureaucrats and less participation by the average taxpayer.

Election commissioners in Sedgwick, Johnson, Shawnee and Wyandotte counties have certain election law jurisdiction over about 40 percent of the state's population, yet are political appointees of a chief election officer. This chief election officer is the Secretary of State (and of course that is an elected office). This could allow for disenfranchisement for a large block of citizens, yet that group would have no political recourse for removing or voting out their elected commissioner.

I believe Kansans want to be involved in selecting the persons who will administer the state's election laws, and who also will provide leadership and direction in developing more opportunities for allowing persons to become registered voters. Senate Bill 29 will do just that.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Submit a Bill For Vote Change Of Water Board

L.C. Towns 1/23/69
(By The Star's Own Service)

Topeka—A bill to change the election date of members of the Johnson County water district to coincide with the city and school district elections in April was introduced yesterday in the Senate by members of the Johnson County delegation.

Election of the board now is held on a Saturday early in November.

A similar bill was passed by the last session but vetoed by Gov. Robert Docking. The governor acted after considerable protest was raised by proponents of the present plan on the grounds the election of water board members would become secondary in the minds of residents if it were joined with city and school board issues.

Sen. Robert F. Bennett, (R-

rairie Village) said yesterday the intent was to consolidate elections and save the expense of a separate election for only the water board.

It provides that the five board members serve for 4-year terms and sets up a procedure for the staggered election of board members to be held on the first Tuesday in April of odd-numbered years.

PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY BILL IS READIED

D. Cap. 1-28-69

Sen. Ed Reilly, R-

Leavenworth, said Monday he will introduce a bill next week that would establish a preferential presidential primary election in Kansas.

Reilly, who currently is rounding up support for such a measure, said the bill probably would be patterned after the Oregon presidential primary.

"I don't know how much support among the legislature there is for a presidential primary," Reilly said. "But I do know the people of Kansas want a presidential primary."

The senator said a newspaper mail-in poll he conducts every session shows "overwhelming support" for a presidential primary.

Under a preferential primary plan, Kansas voters would go to the polls during a presidential election year and state their choice of primary presidential candidates.

Delegates from Kansas to the

Senate Panel to Introduce Voting Commissioner Bill

D. Cap. 1/28/69
By LEROY TOWNS

Legislative Writer

Over the strenuous objection of a Democratic member, the Senate Elections Committee Monday voted 6-2 to introduce a bill giving the secretary of state power to appoint election commissioners in Kansas' four most populous counties.

The bill proposed by Republican Sen. Ben Foster of Wichita, Elections Committee chairman, has the indications of becoming a seething political issue.

Democratic Gov. Robert Docking now has power to appoint the election commissioners in Shawnee, Sedgwick, Wyandotte and Johnson counties. Secretary of State Mrs. Elwill Shanahan, to whom appointive power would go under the bill, is a Republican.

And heightening the partisan flavor of the measure, Senate Republicans voted in a caucus last week to support such a bill.

Foster's request to have the elections committee introduce the bill as a committee-sponsored measure Monday irked Sen. Jack Steineger, D-Muncie, who along with Sen. Charles Hinchey, D-Kansas City, is a minority member of the committee.

"I object to being a member of a committee and have a bill introduced that has my understood endorsement when it doesn't have my support at all," Steineger told the committee.

Knows Nothing

"I can't conceive of any legislator wanting to put his name on a bill that he knows nothing about."

Foster countered by saying the bill, after introduction, would be returned to the committee for hearings and discussion.

national nominating convention would then be bound to support the winners on the first ballot.

Reilly was a delegate to the Republican National Convention last August in Miami Beach.

"Why can't this bill be sponsored by the individual who proposed it, anyway?"

Steineger asked. "Just who is proposing this bill?"

"I hoped the committee would sponsor it," Foster said.

"Well, okay, who asked that the bill be drafted?" Steineger retorted.

"I did," Foster said. "I hoped the committee would sponsor it. I thought that would give the bill a little more prestige."

Most legislators believe a bill sponsored by a legislative committee carries more weight than a bill sponsored by an individual lawmaker.

At stake are the appointments of three of the four election commissioners. Only four counties have election commissioners. Elections in other counties are handled by county clerks.

The term of Virginia Harrison, Sedgwick County election commissioner, expires July 18, 1968. In Johnson County, Willard Cook's term expires Aug. 31, 1970. And in Shawnee County the term of Sharon Addison expires Jan. 4, 1970.

Thus Docking would be in a position to appoint Democrat election commissioners in the three counties.

Most often discussed in connection with the proposed bill is the term of Mrs. Harrison in Sedgwick County.

The term of Ralph Brown in Wyandotte County expires June 30, 1971 after Docking's second term of office ends.

Appoints Two

Docking has appointed two of the state's four election commissioners: Brown in Wyandotte County and Mrs. Atchison in Shawnee County. Mrs. Atchison is serving the unexpired term of the late Viola Pritchard.

Both Brown and Mrs. Atchison are Democrats.

Sen. Reynolds Schultz, R-Lawrence, told the committee Monday that giving the secretary of state appointive power over election commissioners would be a further consolidation of election reforms undertaken during the 1968 session.

Makes Sense

"We gave the secretary of state power to make certain rules, and the election commissioners work closely with the secretary of state," Schultz said.

"To me this would make sense that the secretary of state pick the commissioners."

But Steineger said, "In making this drastic departure of policy of 20 years maybe we should give it serious study. Maybe we should let the people in each county elect the commissioners."

Steineger added: "Then maybe we should make the effective date of such a bill after 1970 . . ."

"We certainly wouldn't want the public to get the idea we are playing politics up here."

Atch. 3

amendment on the ballot.

But technicalities aside, the change is overdue. Part of the frustration of young people today lies in the inability to express their opinions at the polls in the very years when they often are the most interested in politics. They leave high school after years of studying the democratic processes; they can continue these studies in college; they can pass out campaign literature; drive voters to the polls and work hard for a party or a candidate. But they can't vote. And despite President Nixon's comment that being "old enough to fight" is not the reason for change, it does seem ridiculous that an individual can be a veteran of three years in the military service before he can vote for the policy-makers of his country.

The voting age ought to be lowered, and there is no reason why the attempt cannot be made at both the state and federal levels. Congress can move toward this reform and so can the separate states. But the important thing is for the lawmakers to get moving.

Opposition to City Projects Said Up

D. Cap. 2/14/69

Topeka City Clerk Bill Douglass told a house committee Thursday there is increasing citizens' opposition to major municipal projects.

Douglass testified before the House Committee on Elections, Fees and Salaries, which is considering a bill that would change existing Kansas law and relax the requirements for validating signatures on petitions.

More Petitions

"I think the easier you make it," he told the committee, "the more petitions you're going to get.

"There's increasing opposition from citizens to major projects, and I see this matter of petitions as a real problem."

Douglass was among several witnesses who urged that language in the bill be clarified to spell out more precisely what guidelines to follow in validating the signatures on protest petitions.

Problem Told

The problem, Douglass testified, is, "How do you establish that the person who signed a petition is the same individual as the one listed on the voter registration book?"

"You need to clarify that one point—how do you determine identity?"

Douglass who was accompa-

ny City Attorney John Lewis, is fresh from an unpleasant encounter with protest petitions.

He ruled last year that petitions calling for a vote on the Topeka-city manager question did not have a sufficient number of valid names.

When members of the Topeka Citizens Assn., which was conducting the petition drive, sought to verify enough signatures through affidavits to satisfy the statutory minimum, Douglas ruled the procedure was unacceptable.

A court suit has been started in Shawnee County District court to settle the matter.

John Dekker, city attorney of Wichita, also said he believes language in the bill does not solve the question of how to resolve discrepancies between the way a name is signed on a protest petition and the way it is listed on the official voter registration books.

Wright Crummett, general counsel for the League of Kansas Municipalities, suggested the bill be amended to give the secretary of state authority to establish guidelines for determining the validity of signatures.

Crummett said he would draw up some proposed rules and regulations and submit them to the committee for its consideration.

Committee Back Appointment Bill

D. Cap. 2/18/67

The Senate Committee on Elections overrode Democrat protests Monday and recommended passage of a bill that strips the governor of his power to appoint elections commissioners and reassigns it to the secretary of state.

The bill now goes back to the full Senate debate.

Demos Vote No

Both Democrat members of the committee voted against the action. Sen. Jack Steineger, Muncie, called it "pure partisan politics."

The other Democrat member of the panel, Sen. Charles Hinchey, Kansas City, told the seven Republican members who voted to recommend the bill for passage, "You're going to cut off your nose to save your face."

The committee action followed a joint meeting of the House and Senate elections committees to hear testimony on the bill from three of the state's four elections commissioners.

Change Opposed

The lone Democrat commissioner to appear, Shawnee County Commissioner of Elections Mrs. Sharon Atchison, said she sees no need to change the appointing authority.

Her two Republican commissioner colleagues, Willard Cook of Johnson County and Mrs. Virginia Lee Harrison of Wichita, declared they see great

advantage in a bill giving authority to the secretary of state.

The terms of both Cook and Mrs. Harrison are due to expire during Democrat Gov. Robert Docking's second two-year office.

No Shift Asked

Before the Senate committee voted on the measure, Steineger pointed out that none of the elections commissioners or the secretary of state, who is Republican, had asked for the change.

"I'm curious as to who asked for the bill, and I'm curious as to why it's come up now after the present system has worked well for 20 years," Steineger said.

The two Republican election commissioners said the bill is a logical proposal because it would give appointing authority to the state official who is charged with responsibility for administering and supervising state election laws.

Democrats retort it's a little late to be thinking about such logic.

tee, Rep. Kenneth Winters, R-Prairie Village, said the idea behind the bill was "to make petitions more readily available to persons of honest interest" in the questions that are the usual issues behind petition drives.

"I don't think there's one in 50 people who can remember exactly how they signed the registration books," Winter declared.

The key provision in the bill is one which would allow election officials to accept petition signatures "so long as persons of the same names, or ones of such similarity as to reasonably appear to be the same persons, are contained in the registration

porters and opponents of a presidential primary for Kansas arguments today at the weekly eggs and issues last sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce. Porters of the measure and enactment of such a would give Kansans a voice in selecting the presidential nominees.ponents charged a presidential primary is little than a personality contest, would only boost the mountainous costs of signing for president.

Bill in Each House

There are two bills calling for a presidential primary in Kansas pending before the legislature — one in the House and another in the Senate.

to provide for binding the presidential convention delegates in Kansas to the winner of a Kansas primary through the ballot.

Sen. Ed Reilly, Bentonworth, co-author of the bill, told the audience of laborers and businessmen, "Obviously the public is dissatisfied with the present method of selecting presidential candidates."

Reilly said student demonstrations are a manifestation of disillusion among both young and old Americans with the responsiveness of present political institutions.

Arguments Discounted

Reilly's partner in arguing for the primary idea, Rep. Payne "B" Ratner Jr., R-Wichita, discounted arguments used by opponents.

Reilly said the fact that few states do not have presidential primaries is proof that political parties in those states without a primary will not part with their power to control delegates to the national nominating conventions.

Sen. Tom Van Sickle, R-

Scott, spearheaded debate in opposition to the presidential bills.

"History has proven," Van Sickle declared, "that presidential primaries do not elect the winners."

Reilly cited a long list of presidential primary winners who did not capture their party nominations at convention time.

Few Turn Out

Van Sickle also declared that few people turn out to vote in a presidential primary, because it would require them to declare their political affiliation and "the majority of Americans regard themselves as independents," Van Sickle said.

Van Sickle's colleague in opposition to the presidential primary idea, former state Republican chairman George Nettels of Pittsburg, said the current method for selecting delegates in Kansas is a good one.

"Basically it is a distillation process that starts at the grass roots with county caucuses," Nettels said.

The former Kansas GOP leader also declared that phrases such as czars, king-makers and power brokers are designed to inflame passion "and ignore the voice of reason."

PUSH BILL TO TAKE A GOVERNOR POWER

Kansas Senate Committee Recommends Secretary of State Name Election Aides

K.C. Star 2/18/69
By Ray Morgan
(The Star's Kansas Correspondent)

Topeka—A bill to change the office of election commissioner in such counties as Johnson and Wyandotte from appointment by the governor to appointment by the secretary of state was recommended for passage yesterday by the Senate elections committee.

The action came after C. Willard Cook, Johnson County election commissioner, and Mrs. Virginia Lee Harrison, Sedgwick County election commissioner, testified before a joint hearing of the House and Senate election committees. They said appointment by the secretary of state was in line with good election procedure because the secretary of state was the officer responsible for administration of state election laws.

Two committee members, both Democrats from Kansas City, Kansas, Sen. Charles Hinchey and Sen. Jack Steineger, charged that the action was politically motivated because Gov. Robert Docking is a Democrat and the Legislature is Republican.

The bill would apply to Johnson, Wyandotte, Sedgwick and Shawnee Counties. These are the four most populous counties in

the state and the only ones where election commissioners are appointed by the governor.

Sen. C. Y. Thomas (R-Mission Hills) made the motion that the bill be recommended favorably for passage.

Senator Thomas earlier had presented letters from Rex F. Price, chairman of the Johnson County board of commissioners, and James Bouska, Johnson County attorney, urging that Cook be retained as Johnson County election commissioner. Both Bouska and Price supported the bill.

Bouska said Cook had become a student of election procedures in Kansas and was considered an authority. He said instructions Cook had given in connection with elections always had been correct.

"Since he took office, we have never had a complaint regarding his office from the officials of either of the political parties," Bouska said.

Cook told the committee he called on the secretary of state at least once a week in connection with election procedures but that he only had talked twice to the office of the governor in his six years in office.

He said he believed the secretary of state was the proper office under which the election commissioners should operate.

Mrs. Harrison said there was valid argument for having the secretary of state name the election commissioners because the election commissioners serve as the local arms of the secretary of state in administering state election laws. She said such a change would minimize political influence.

Mrs. Sharon Atchison, Shawnee County election commissioner who was named by Governor Docking, said she believed the present situation worked well.

Senator Steineger asked Mrs. Harrison, Mrs. Atchison and Cook whether the election commissioners of the four big counties had requested such legislation. All three said that they had not.

Handwritten signature or initials

Urban, Rural Split Dividing Senators

2.0 Cap. 4/11/69
By LEROY TOWNS
Legislative Writer

A clash between urban and rural senators developed Thursday in the Kansas Senate during a hectic session that saw one upper chamber member lashing out at the House of Representatives.

The urban-rural clash, which has been building momentum this session with urban solons lining up with Sen. Robert Bennett, R-Prairie Village, came when two minor bills were bulked on one roll call vote. One of the bills, allowing publishing of city zoning ordinances by reference, had backing from a majority of the urban-oriented senators. The other, allowing a half-mill levy for noxious weed funds by counties, was supported by rural senators.

While urban senators registered their votes against the half-mill levy measure, rural senators in turn cast their votes against the zoning measure.

Sen. Steadman Ball, R-Atchison, saying he was appalled at the urban-rural voting on the two measures, cast an opposing vote for the zoning bill. "I hope this is the last time we see this voting by sectionalism," Ball said.

On the Ball

Ball's comment touched off a series of vote changes. Several senators, including Frank Hodge, R-Hutchinson, and E. W. Strahan, R-Salina, took the floor to say they had not cast votes according to any urban-rural split.

Both measures passed and were sent to the governor for his action.

An urban-rural division in the Senate has become increasingly apparent this session. Urban senators banded together earlier in the session to kill a bill that would have clamped a mandatory freeze on property taxes.

And when the measure was revived in different form, they again succeeded in amending a distribution formula for a one

cent sales tax increase of the bill to give more favorable treatment to urban areas.

An attack on the House came when Ball took the floor to move that the upper chamber consider no more bills sent over from the House Judiciary Committee.

Ball, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said he was irked because the House Judiciary Committee had withheld action on 17 bills previously approved by the Senate.

Ball Balks

"I move we do not consider any more bills from the judiciary committee in the House for the balance of the session until the House committee takes some action on those bills," Ball said.

But after a quick conference with Bennett, Ball rose to announce "A cooler head than mine has prevailed." He withdrew the motion and the Senate then proceeded to approve several House Judiciary Committee-sponsored bills.

Solons Back On Monday

2.0 J.L. 4/11/69
The Legislature will go home late today for the weekend and return Monday to wind up the 1969 session hopefully by the end of Tuesday, Speaker Alvin Strowig said today.

Strowig, Abilene Republican, outlined the plans to the members of the Kansas House.

The legislators would expect to return in about 10 days, however, to consider vetoes by the governor.

It is anticipated the return would perhaps be for a single day.

TWO VEToes BY DOCKING

IRE IN ACTIONS

Message Assails Motives
of Some G. O. P.
Legislators

NO CALL FOR A CHANGE

Executive Asserts Officials
Had Not Asked

for Measure

R.C. Staro 4/11/69
By Ray Morgan
(The Star's Kansas Correspondent)

Topeka — Gov. Robert Docking today vetoed bills that added criminal penalties to the Kansas "Right to Work" law and that transferred appointive powers over county election commissioners from the governor to the secretary of state.

Governor Docking described the Right to Work bill as lacking in legal purpose, highly discriminatory and disruptive of good labor-management relations. He cited an opinion issued last night by Kent Frizzell, Kansas attorney general, indicating it would not apply to federal installations such as the Sunflower ordinance plant at De Soto.

Blow to Office

The Kansas governor was even more forceful in attacking the other bill (S. B. 63), designed to take his powers for appointing election commissioners, calling the measure "a disgusting, irreverent attack upon the office of the governor."

Kansas Republican legislative leaders said, however, that they would attempt to override his veto on both measures tonight or tomorrow.

There appears to be a question whether the Republicans, who have the necessary two-thirds vote in both houses, can muster enough conviction to override the veto on the Right to Work measure.

It appears likely, however, that the G. O. P. will be able to gather sufficient strength to override his veto on the election commissioners bill.

er to the secretary of state, a Republican, could save the job of Willard Coz, Johnson County election commissioner, a Republican who was named by John Anderson, Ofathe, when he was governor.

"There has been only one reported violation of the Kansas constitutional amendment prohibiting compulsory union membership in 10 years," Governor Docking said in vetoing the Right to Work change (H. B. 1179). "This bill was written—as its proponents have claimed—to correct an alleged problem at the Sunflower Ordinance plant, a federal installation. The Kansas attorney general has stated the opinion that a Kansas law would not apply to federal installations."

The governor went on to say that the provisions of the bill appeared to him to discriminate in penalties between the corporation executive and the individual businessman and between the labor leader and the laboring man.

"Since it is the opinion of the attorney general that the bill would apply only to those persons engaged in private labor-business management and not on the federal level, the bill discriminates against a great number of working people," Docking said.

A minority report against the bill was signed by Sen. Steadman Ball (R-Atchison), chairman of the Senate judiciary committee, and expressed great opposition to the bill. Others who signed the report were Sen. Norma E. Gaar (R-Westwood), Sen. George D. Bell (D-Kansas City, Kansas), Sen. Jack Steinger (D-Kansas City, Kansas), Sen. Elwaine F. Pomeroy (R-Topeka) and Sen. Harold Herd (D-Coldwater).

In commenting on his veto of the election commissioner bill, the governor said the bill had been presented to the Legislature "disguised as an election reform measure."

"S. B. 63 is a step backward and has been recently described in an editorial as political legislation at its worst," the governor said.

Docking said the bill was not initiated or requested by Mrs. Elwill Shanahan, a Republican, secretary of state, or any of the election commissioners in the four big counties, "but was originated in the partisan minds of a handful of Republican state sen-

able device to achieve and satisfy their own personal whim.

COMMENTS ON SENATE BILL 29

The policy decision made by the Legislature in 1949 was to make the election officials in Johnson, Wyandotte, Shawnee and Sedgwick appointive and full time. In 1969 the legislature reaffirmed its commitment to these positions by retaining the appointive nature of the job, but by making the Secretary of State the appointing authority. There is a large and dramatic difference between the role of the Secretary of State, the County Clerks and the Election Commissioners.

For example, the role of the Johnson County Election Commissioner in dealing with 19 cities and over 84 elections in the last two years is far different than the problems of Stanton County which does not have either a second or first class city. The Sedgwick County Election Commissioner in 1980 and 1982 administered over 138 elections.

No problem or incident has been brought to the attention of the Secretary of State which would have been cured by making these positions elective.

There are two questions which must be addressed when considering SB 29.

1. What specific actions or problems have occurred in Sedgwick, Johnson, Wyandotte and Shawnee Counties that are disagreeable? and

Atch. #

2. Would the election as opposed to the appointment of the election commissioner change the outcome of that problem?

The election commissioners have been appointed for over 32 years. In considering this bill, I would remind the committee of the famous adage: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."