

Approved 3-23-88  
Date

MINUTES OF THE Senate COMMITTEE ON Elections

The meeting was called to order by Senator Gordon at  
Chairperson

1:30 ~~am~~/p.m. on March 16, 1988 in room 522-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator Vidricksen (excused).

Committee staff present:

Myrta Anderson, Legislative Research Department  
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes's Office

Conferees appearing before the committee:

John Torbett, Executive Director Kansas Association  
of Counties  
Patsy McDonald, Shawnee County Election Clerk  
Ron Thornburgh, Secretary of State's Office  
Earl Nehring, Representing himself  
Carol Rinzulli, Lawrence, not affiliated  
Robert Coldsnow, Legislative counsel

The minutes of March 2 were approved by motion of Senator Bond  
and second by Senator Martin.

SB 721 - concerning terms of precinct committeemen and precinct  
committeewomen. Myrta Anderson of the Legislative Research Department  
gave a brief outline of the bill.

John Torbett, executive director of the Kansas Association of Counties,  
testified in support of SB 721. Mr. Torbett distributed copies of his  
testimony and stated in order to keep election costs at a reasonable  
level their association would propose that the term of office for precinct  
committeemen and precinct committeewomen be extended to four years to  
coincide with most other elective offices. The current term is for  
two years. (Attachment 1).

Patsy McDonald, Shawnee County Election Clerk, speaking for several  
county clerks, who could not attend the meeting to testify due to the  
stormy weather, stated that the County clerks were very strongly in  
favor of SB 721 and they wanted to go on record of supporting the  
measure. Ms. McDonald requested that the record show that the excessive  
work was minor to county clerks, but the cost factor was their main  
objective in supporting SB 721.

Ron Thornburgh, Secretary of State's Office, speaking for SB 721 said  
it was very similar to a bill introduced four years ago and that the bill  
passed both Houses but was vetoed by the Governor for reasons that their  
office did not understand. Mr. Thornburgh stated it was a tremendous  
waste of money for the printing of blank ballots every two years.

Earl Nehring, speaking for himself and not for Common Cause/Kansas,  
said the committee would be changing something that has been in the  
statutes for sometime and with a 2-year term there is citizens involvement  
which would be reduced by a large percentage if the bill was amended to  
4-year terms.

Carol Rinzulli, Lawrence, not affiliated, testified that the bill  
would not only be helpful to county clerks but it would be helpful to  
people who want to be active in their party.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate COMMITTEE ON Elections,  
room 522-S, Statehouse, at 1:30 ~~xxx~~/p.m. on March 16, 1988

Committee discussion followed but no action by the committee was taken at this time.

HB 2739 - Relating to precinct boundaries. Myrta Anderson gave an explanation of the bill and she said it was introduced at the request of the Secretary of State's office.

Ron Thornburgh, representing the Secretary of State's office, said the bill amends the requirement that county election officers notify the Secretary of State of changes in designation of polling places. He pointed out that the designation of polling places was not needed by their office.

Mr. Robert Coldsnow, legislative counsel, noted the amendments in the bill changing one mile to two miles which is the scale used in suitable maps to meet the requirements of the federal bureau of the census. Mr. Coldsnow also pointed out that the features including municipal boundaries shall be shown on the maps.

The committee took no action on HB 2739 at this time.

HB 2778 - Relates to federal services absentee ballots. Ron Thornburgh appeared to testify and stated the Secretary of State is very much in favor of the bill in order to clarify the procedure relating to federal services absentee ballots. The committee took no action on the bill.

The chairman announced the committee would meet next Wednesday, March 23, 1988, and would hold hearings on Sub. HB 2755, HB 2831 and HB 2886.

The meeting was adjourned.



# Kansas Association of Counties

*Serving Kansas Counties*

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March 16, 1988

Testimony

To - Members, Senate Election Committee

From - John T. Torbert, Executive Director  
Kansas Association of Counties

The Kansas Association of Counties is officially in support of SB 721. The position statement adopted at our annual conference in Wichita last year is as follows -

"To keep election costs at a reasonable level, we propose that the term of office for precinct committeemen and precinct committeewomen be extended to four years to coincide with most other elective offices."

Very simply, the issue is cost. For example, I discussed this legislation with the Marshall County Clerk this morning. She indicated that in the "off" election year, (the year in which only one commissioner is standing for election) there are 25 out of her 30 precincts with blank ballots. The reason for this is that the only election being held in those 25 precincts is precinct committeeman and women. In most cases, people don't seek the office so the two parties are listed with two blank lines by each party. It costs tax money to print the ballots and hold these elections. We feel that going to a four year term would represent a cost savings and not disenfranchise any voters.

*Attachment 1  
March 16, 1988  
Senate Elections*