

Approved \_\_\_\_\_  
Date 2/14/89

MINUTES OF THE House COMMITTEE ON Elections

The meeting was called to order by Representative Kenneth R. King at \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

9:11 a.m./p.m. on Thursday, February 9, 1989 in room 521-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Mary Jane Johnson, excused.

Committee staff present: Myrta Anderson, Legislative Research Department  
Fred Carman, Revisor of Statues Office  
Ellie Luthye, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Representative R.H. Miller  
Michael Woolf, Executive Director, Common Cause  
Richard Taylor, Kansans For Life At Its Best  
Opponent - Craig Grant - KNEA

The meeting of the Elections Committee was called to order at 9:11 a.m. by Chairman Kenneth R. King.

Chairman King acknowledged the Shawnee Heights High School Government Class who were visiting the committee.

The first order of business was hearings on HB 2164. Myrta Anderson explained this bill which would change the time to reorganize county central committees to December.

Representative Cates was the sponsor of this bill and he presented his reason for introducing the bill, feeling it would strengthen both parties. Representative Cates answered questions from the committee on how this bill would affect the current party organizations and other related concerns.

Representative R.H. Miller appeared as an opponent of the bill. He stated county committees now have the option of keeping the same officers until following the general election and then elect the new officers or they may elect new officers immediately following the primary election. Mr. Miller was concerned that in trying to solve some problems the bill might be causing a ripple effect through the political party organization with regard to when they meet to elect the 22 members of the State committee. Mr. Miller's primary concern is that almost all of the 210 county committees are using one of the options with no problems at all and that to make this drastic change would cause many more problems than it would solve.

There were no other people to appear before the committee and Chairman King closed the hearings on HB 2164.

Chairman King then called on Representative Shallenburger to explain HB 2136. This bill would limit the amount contributed by certain political committees or PACS.

Michael Woolf appeared before the committee and presented testimony for HB 2136. (Attachment I)

Kansans For Life At Its Best was represented by Richard Taylor who spoke as a proponent of HB 2136. (Attachment II)

The Chairman then called on Craig Grant, KNEA, who spoke in opposition of HB 2136. (Attachment III)

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House COMMITTEE ON Elections,  
room 521-S, Statehouse, at 9:11 a.m./p.m. on Thursday, February 9, 1989.

Representative Empson requested the committee be furnished with the laws regarding campaign contributions and their limits from other states. Carol Williams, Kansas Public Disclosure, will provide the committee with this information.

The minutes of the meeting on February 7th were presented to the committee for approval. Representative Helgerson moved the minutes be accepted as presented. Representative Shallenburger seconded. The motion carried.

Chairman King adjourned the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

The next meeting of the Elections Committee will be Tuesday, February 14, 9:00 a.m. in Room 521-S.





**COMMON CAUSE / KANSAS**

701 Jackson, Room B-6 • Topeka, Kansas 66603

February 9, 1989

Statement in support of House Bill 2136  
Presented to the House Elections Committee  
by Michael Woolf, Executive Director

Common Cause/Kansas supports House Bill 2136 and asks that the committee recommend it favorably for passage. Common Cause is based on citizen efforts to open up the political system and keep it open. Our basic concerns have been to build public support for that system by working for legislation which assures a responsive, accountable government in which citizens can have faith that the public's interests are paramount. To that end, we have supported effective campaign finance reporting laws, as well as regulation of lobbying, conflict of interest laws, and open meetings as fundamental needs if public support is to be maintained.

Rapid growth of the financial involvement of PACs in election campaigns has become a major political concern at both the national and state level. Common Cause shares this concern and supports efforts at all levels to achieve effective reductions in political committee contributions.

In all cases, a major concern is the power, real and potential, placed in the hands of PACs and the special interests they represent. Money can buy access and influence. Unfortunately, PACs represent only segments of the many interests found in society. Thus, PACs tend to distort the overall public interest and, as PAC money increases, public concern about the integrity of our political system grows.

It is true that PACs represent another way for individuals to contribute to political campaigns. But when individual giving is pooled into PAC funds, something happens. The individual no longer decides who is to receive his or her contribution. The decision is instead based on the PAC's narrow interest and is made by the PAC's leaders.

Common Cause members realize that it is easier to get campaign funds from PACs than by asking for many small individual citizen contributions. And once PACs have provided enough funds for a campaign, there is not much incentive to seek out individual contributions. If we want to maintain respect and support for our electoral system, it is a wise move to take steps that can help citizens feel that their participation carries some weight in the halls of government.

*Attachment I*

One step in the right direction is to reduce the amount of money that PACs can give to candidates and encourage greater reliance on citizen financial support in elections.

Common Cause strongly supports House Bill 2136 as an effort to minimize the influence and access that large PAC donations can have on elected officials.

February 9, 1989  
Hearing on House Bill 2136  
House Elections Committee

Richard Taylor, President  
KANSANS FOR LIFE AT ITS BEST!

For many years we have been concerned about the ever increasing millions of dollars contributed to legislative candidates at the national and state level by Political Action Committees. It has been said about some lawmakers in Washington, "They are the best that TV money can buy."

Dedicated and concerned candidates must have money to finance their campaigns, so they are forced to accept PAC money or their chances of winning are slim to nothing.

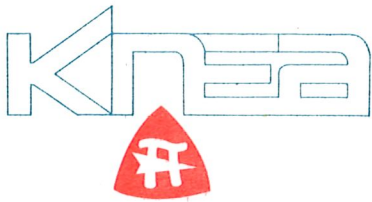
We believe candidates should win on the issues, not on how much money they can raise and spend in their campaign.

Our organization deals only in issues. We do not contribute money to any campaign.

It would seem good to place a cap on total campaign expenditures by candidate. In this way they would be forced to meet the people more and more, making their limited dollars do the most good in the best way.

Should the people elect lawmakers or should elections be decided by how much can be spent in the campaign? Every good candidate needs some funds, but things seem to be getting out of hand. Limits would be fair to all candidates. This bill is a little step in the right direction.

*Attachment II*



Craig Grant Testimony Before The  
House Elections Committee  
Thursday, February 9, 1989

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am Craig Grant and I represent Kansas-NEA. I appreciate this opportunity to visit with the committee about HB 2136.

Members of Kansas-NEA have concerns about further limiting the contributions which our members can make through our political action committee. Our teachers realize that they do not have the financial resources that the many richer residents of this state possess. As a result, they agreed to contribute \$7 a person to a political action committee, thus pooling their money so that it is meaningful when we contribute to a candidate. The \$750 limitation which is imposed now is much more restrictive than most states place on political committees. Further restrictions are not warranted in our members' opinion.

Kansas-NEA would oppose HB 2136 as a method to place our teachers' ability to be politically involved at a disadvantage when compared to the wealthy in this state. Thank you for listening to the concerns of our 22,000 members.