

MINUTES OF THE Senate COMMITTEE ON Elections

The meeting was called to order by Senator Don Sallee at _____
Chairperson

1:30 ~~am~~ p.m. on March 13, 1989, 19__ in room 529-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

All members were present

Committee staff present:

- Myrta Anderson, Research Department
- Fred Carman, Revisor of Statutes' Office
- Elizabeth Handke, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

- Ron Thornburgh, Secretary of State Office
- Larry Scheller, Leavenworth County Clerk

Others attending: see attached list (attachment 1)

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Sallee at 1:33 P.M.

Ron Thornburgh of the Secretary of State Office appeared before the committee on H.B. 2165 (attachment 2). He stated they are not opposed to the entire bill but were opposed to Section 2. Section 2 of the bill allows write-in votes to be cast for the offices of President and Governor. Unless the voter casts a ballot for 7 presidential electors, a write-in for president would be futile. We do not feel it is in the best interest of the public to allow them to think a write-in vote cast for president would be a valid vote. Also, because state law mandates that a candidate for governor must run for office as a member of a team, a write-in for governor would again be a wasted vote. The remaining portions of the bill are simply policy decisions with which we would comply. Senator Yost asked if the Secretary of State Office concurs with Marilyn Chapman's, Sedgwick County Election Commissioner, position on the bill. Ron replied that she was most concerned about two issues; the numbers on absentee ballots in which the county election office may consecutively number absentee ballots which she favors. Before computers were used a numbering system was needed to account for all the ballots. Now the numbering system is not needed in offices that have computers since they have other ways of accounting for the ballots so the numbering of the ballots would be up to the option of the county officer. She is also concerned about the blank lines on absentee ballots which she is opposed to on a cost factor alone. Ron was then asked the purpose of Section 2 and why his office opposes it. He stated that as the Kansas law reads right now a voter is not eligible to cast a write in vote for the office of Governor or President. Section 2 would allow a write in blank line to be place under those offices in a general election. They oppose this section because in essence it would be a wasted vote since the office of President is elected by the electoral vote and in the Governor's race the candidates run as a team so a vote cast for an individual would not comply with state law and would be a wasted vote. Senator Kerr summed up the bill by stating the county clerks oppose the bill since it increases cost, the absentee ballots [may] be consecutively numbered and the Secretary of State Office would like to strike Section 2.

Unless specifically noted, the individual remarks recorded herein have not been transcribed verbatim. Individual remarks as reported herein have not been submitted to the individuals appearing before the committee for editing or corrections.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate COMMITTEE ON Elections
room 529-S, Statehouse, at 1:30 ~~XX~~ XX m./p.m. on March 13, 1989, 19

Larry Scheller, Leavenworth County Clerk, appeared before the committee as an opponent of H.B. 2165. He stated his main opposition to the bill was on cost alone. He recommended killing the bill; he would rather leave it as it is in which the precinct people do not appear on absentee ballots.

Senator Sallee stated that this concluded the hearings on H.B. 2165. Senator Yost made a conceptual motion to delete the following sentences on lines 36-41; On primary election ballots there shall be blank lines only following the offices of precinct committeeman and precinct committeewoman for the voters to write in their choices for each. To the right of each blank lines there shall be printed a square to vote for the person whose name has been written in, to change the word shall to may on line 42 and to delete Section 2. Senator Rock seconded the motion. The motion carried. Senator Yost moved to recommend the bill favorably as amended and Senator Bond seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Senator Kerr moved to approve the minutes of March 6, 1989 and Senator Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Senator Sallee adjourned the meeting at 2:05 P.M.

GUEST LIST

SENATE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

DATE: March 13, 1989

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	ADDRESS	COMPANY/ORGANIZATION
Vincent Falk	Robinson KS	
Ruthanna Falk	Robinson KS	
Larry E. Scheller	Leavenworth KS	Co. Clerk's
Bill Curtis	Topeka	Ks. Assoc. of School Bds.
Michael Woolf	"	Common Cause
Ron Thornburgh	"	SOS
Jana Atchison	"	KADC
Caryl Williams	"	KADC
McHawer	"	Can-Juni
		Elections March 13, 1989 Attachment 1

Bill Graves
Secretary of State



2nd Floor, State Capitol
Topeka, KS 66612-1594
(913) 296-2236

STATE OF KANSAS

TESTIMONY OF RON E. THORNBURGH
SENATE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
MARCH 13, 1989

HB 2165

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

The office of the Secretary of State is opposed to one section of HB 2165. Section 2 of the bill allows write-in votes to be cast for the offices of President and Governor. Unless the voter casts a ballot for 7 presidential electors, a write-in for president would be futile. We do not feel it is in the best interest of the public to allow them to think a write-in vote cast for president would be a valid vote.

Also, because state law mandates that a candidate for governor must run for office as a member of a team, a write-in for governor would again be a wasted vote.

Lastly, a candidate who does not declare his intention to run for either president or governor in a timely manner, has little chance of winning the office. Again, we do not wish to mislead the voters of this state.

The remaining portions of the bill are simply policy decisions with which we would comply.

Election
March 13, 1989
Attachment 2