

Approved 3-19-90
Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS

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

1:30 ~~xxx~~/p.m. on March 5, 1990 in room 529-S of the Capitol.

All members were present ~~except~~:

Committee staff present:

Pat Mah, Legislative Research Department
Ardan Ensley, Revisor of Statutes Office
Clarene Wilms, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Senator Janis Lee
Ron Thornburgh, Office of Secretary of State

The meeting was called to order at 1:37 p.m.

Hearings were opened on SB-148 with Senator Lee telling committee members the bill was requested by a federal government employee who felt the small number of voters in the township in small rural areas failed to provide anonymity in the voting place. Senate Bill 148 provides for the voting to be held in the same voting place, using the same judges and the same ballots as another township. The ballots of each township would be kept separate but would be counted together. No changes would be made in boundaries. This change would be made at the bequest of the voters.

Ron Thornburgh, Office of Secretary of State, stated that the Secretary of State supports the idea of secret ballot and noted the purpose of SB-148 was to insure that Kansans be guaranteed that right by combining the vote results of very small precincts on election night. (Attachment 1) Mr. Thornburgh noted SB-148 did not address the issue of school district or city boundaries crossing county lines and questioned whether the temporary consolidation would be for just one election or whether the appointment would stand until it was removed. Senator Lee stated that in her rural area the townships are precincts and it was her understanding the appointment would stand until removed.

Senator Yost moved to amend SB-148, changing "shall" to "may" on line 31. Senator Reilly seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Senator Johnston moved, with a second from Senator Martin, to report SB-148 as amended favorable for passage. The motion carried.

The chairman told committee members it appeared a campaign finance bill would be coming over from the House and assuming it would be assigned to this committee stated he was assigning it to the previously appointed subcommittee chaired by Senator Yost with Senators Bond and Lee as members and appointing Senator Martin to the committee as well. Senator Yost announced a meeting of the subcommittee would be held March 13, 1990 at 1:30 p.m. in room 529-S.

Senator Reilly moved, with a second from Senator Bond, to approve the minutes of February 26 and 27. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.

Bill Graves
Secretary of State



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

STATE OF KANSAS

TESTIMONY OF RON THORNBURGH
SENATE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
MARCH 5, 1990

SB 148

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

The office of the Secretary of State supports the idea of a secret ballot. SB 148 is intended to insure that Kansans would be guaranteed that right by combining the vote results of very small precincts on election night.

We have however, heard some minor concerns about the bill in its current form and would offer them for the committee's consideration.

1. The votes from a small precinct will always be subject to consideration of the secrecy of the ballot because they will always vote a different ballot than the other voters in the precinct.
2. SB 148 does not address the issue of school district or city boundaries crossing county lines. Can precincts be consolidated across county lines? In many instances, a school district will cross a county line and leave a minimum number of people not living in the home county to vote on a school issue. Because those not living in the home county, but within the school district, must vote a ballot different than the remaining voters in their county, the secrecy of their votes may still be questioned.
3. One of the County Election Officers I spoke with would like to have the option of combining townships as well as precincts even though the townships have nearly 30 voters apiece. She has three townships that vote on all of the same officers except township and precinct officers. She would like to have the option of combining the townships to vote on the same ballot except for the officers listed above in which case a separate ballot would be given to voters of the separate townships. This action would enable her to save some money on ballot preparation.

Thank you for your consideration of these matters.

*Senate Elections
March 5, 1990
Attachment 1*