

Approved: 3-22-07
Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE ELECTIONS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tim Huelskamp at 1:30 P.M. on January 17, 2007 in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Martha Dorsey, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Matt Spurgin, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Ken Wilke, Revisor of Statutes
Zoie Kern, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Brad Bryant, Secretary of States Office
Jamie Shew, Douglas County Clerk

Others attending:

See attached list.

Meeting began with testimony from Brad Bryant in favor of **SB 65 Elections; relating to advanced voting (Attachment 1)**.

Testimony from Jamie Shrew, Douglas County Clerk in favor of **SB 65 (Attachment 2)**.

Written testimony in favor of **SB 65** was submitted for Brian D. Newby, Johnson County Election Office (**Attachment 3**).

Motion was made by Senator Francisco to accept technical error change. Page 3, line 20, comma replaced with period and following small case s changed to uppercase S. Motioned seconded by Senator Reitz.

Motion carried.

Motion made by Senator Francisco to recommend **SB 65** favorably to Senate.

Motion carried..

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Zoie C. Kern, Committee Secretary

RON THORNBURGH
Secretary of State



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STATE OF KANSAS
Senate Committee on Elections and Local Government

Testimony on Senate Bill 65

Brad Bryant, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
Elections and Legislative Matters

January 17, 2007

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 65. This bill will expand voting opportunities for Kansans by allowing more counties to establish satellite advance voting sites. Current law restricts satellite advance voting to those counties with populations greater than 250,000—Johnson and Sedgwick Counties.

The Secretary of State has frequently proposed and supported legislation to expand voting opportunities, including proposing the original bill to adopt advance voting in 1995. It is imperative that any expansion in voting opportunities be considered only if it can be accomplished with adequate security measures to protect the integrity of the electoral process. The experience we have with satellite voting since its inception in 1999 has proven that it can be done in a secure fashion, and recent technological advancements will enable the effective expansion of satellite advance voting as proposed in this legislation.

We support this expansion of satellite advance voting for the following reasons:

- It represents an expansion of a program that has already proven to be popular among voters.
- It offers voters additional opportunity and convenience, thereby encouraging higher turnout.
- It can be done without compromising the security or integrity of the process.
- It will help alleviate the loss of polling places that has occurred in recent years as a result of the Help America Vote Act.

We recommend the committee report Senate Bill favorably for passage. Thank you for your consideration.



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Marni D. Penrod
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Deputy Clerk-Elections

Senate Committee on Elections and Local Government

Testimony on SB 65: Satellite Advance Voting

January 17, 2007

Jamie Shew, Douglas County Clerk

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of satellite advance voting for all Kansas counties as found in the language of HB 2019. This bill represents a great opportunity for the citizens of Douglas County to increase their access to the democratic process. Advance voting has become an increasingly popular method for citizen participation in elections. During the 2004 General Election, 10,020 citizens advance voted in Douglas County, representing 19.6% of the total cast votes. Of these, 4,661 were in-person advance voters. The 2004 in-person advance totals surpass the *total* number of advance votes cast in 2000, when 4,421 citizens advance voted. The recent 2006 general election had 16% advance turnout, compared with the 9% advance turnout in 2002. All indications exhibit participation in advance voting will continue to increase in future elections.

The current law restricts any form of satellite advance voting in Douglas County. As a result, my ability to respond to citizens' needs and increase their opportunities for access to the polls is limited. While most testimonies will concentrate on the impact of advance satellite voting in larger elections, the positive impact for the citizens of my county are best highlighted in an example involving a smaller election.

On December 22, 2005, Baldwin City in Douglas County held a very important special election regarding Sunday liquor sales in response to a citizen petition. The timing of the election caused concern about voter participation. Under the current law I could not offer in-person advance voting in Baldwin City, which may have increased opportunities for citizen participation. Therefore, citizens who live in or around Lawrence have additional access to voting that can not be offered to the other citizens in the county. By approving satellite advance voting, you will give me the tools to offer equal voting access to *all* voters in Douglas County.

In addition to equal access within the county, approving satellite advance voting provides equity throughout the state of Kansas. By allowing only two counties the privilege of additional access to the polls, citizens in the other counties are denied the same right. While offering in-person advance voting may not be the choice for every county, it should at least be an option for those of us who want to meet citizen needs and increase opportunities for their involvement in the elections process.

Thank you for your time, and I am available to stand for any questions.

Senate Elections and Local
Government Committee

1/17/07
Attachment 2

Johnson County Election Office



Brian D. Newby
Election Commissioner

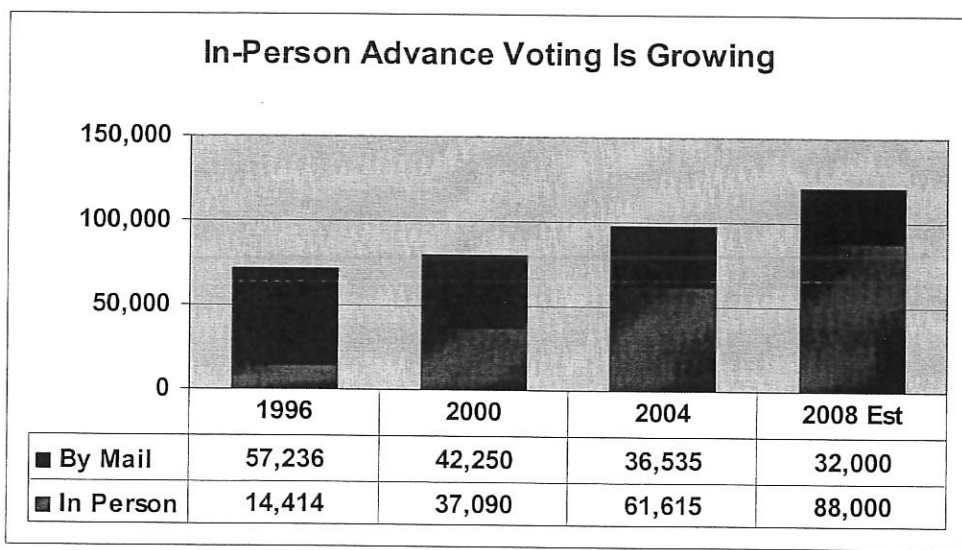
TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of SB 65's satellite advance voting provisions.

Although Johnson County has had advance voting for several years, this bill impacts our residents and voters as well in a way I will explain in a moment.

First, however, let me provide a brief history of the impact of advance voting for our presidential elections. The chart below shows the growth of advance voting since 1996. We have seen the number of advance voters in person increase dramatically and we expect continued growth in 2008.



We have utilized 3 advance voting locations in each gubernatorial and presidential primary and general election.

Securing polling locations is a major challenge for us. Schools have security apprehensions, churches can be seen by voters as having conflicts of interests in some races, and counties generally do not have advance voting locations. Senate Elections and Local Government Committee

ocation rental. So, the movement to advance voting is important as preparation for the potential of having fewer polling locations available on election day.

In the future at your convenience, I would be glad to go through a deep dive of the various benefits and challenges of advance voting, although it is fair to simply say that advance voting has been a major success in Johnson County.

Beyond supporting other counties by testifying, I also think there is a fairness aspect that impacts Johnson County races and should be considered by the Committee as another reason to allow statewide advance voting.

Often, races cross county boundaries. For instance, my particular U.S. Congressional Representative has part of his district in Wyandotte and Douglas counties. It's possible that advance voting in Johnson County, but not in Douglas County, creates an unfair advantage or disadvantage for particular candidates because the voting processes are not uniform between the counties. Allowing advance voting universally would further ensure a level playing field for all candidates in races that cross county lines.

Please count Johnson County's Election Office as a strong proponent for seeing other counties have satellite advance voting options.

Thank you.

Brian D. Newby