



25 February 2025
Senate Committee on Federal & State Affairs
Senator Mike Thompson, Chair
Senator Tory Marie Blew, Vice Chair
Written Testimony in Opposition to SCR 1611

Chairman Thompson, Vice Chairwoman Blew, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony related to this important issue, and for your time in considering it.

I write to you today as President of the Kansas Organization of State Employees (KOSE), which represents thousands of state employees across Kansas, with over 900 different job titles.

One of the things our KOSE members have in common is that they do the work, every day, that people across our state depend upon, from clearing snow from the highways in KDOT, to caring for the most vulnerable Kansans in our state hospitals through KDADS and then keeping our communities safe as correctional officers in KDOC. Our folks do the work that keeps Kansas secure and stable.

Our work as a union is to ensure their voices are heard, on all subjects of importance to them in the Kansas Legislature. One thing KOSE members continually raise concerns about is the current divisive nature of local, state and federal politics and how governmental and bureaucratic overreach negatively impacts their lives. Unfortunately, their view is that an elected Supreme Court with partisan ties supports and bolsters governmental overreach and division in Kansas politics, rather than eliminating it.

To that end, we would reiterate that infusing politics into the courts at any level, and specifically at the Supreme Court level, is not something the regular working people of KOSE support.

The Supreme Court of Kansas is the last stop in many cases for a legal decision of incredible importance, and they make rulings that all lower courts in Kansas must follow. Having an elected bench, regardless of the current ruling party in Kansas politics, sets all people in Kansas up for situations that are governed by politics, not law. That's not something we can get behind.

There are so many important needs in Kansas right now – we strongly support fixing what's broken.

The Supreme Court of Kansas is not broken. The selection process should not be changed.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Sincerely,

Sarah LaFrenz
KOSE President