

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT BRIEF  
HOUSE BILL NO. 2016**

As Agreed to March 24, 2025

**Brief\***

HB 2016 would amend various provisions of election law concerning the maintenance of voter registration rolls, qualifications for poll workers and election board judges or clerks, and the solicitation of advance voting ballot applications.

***Voter Registration Rolls***

The bill would require a county election officer to remove the name of a registered voter from the registration books and party affiliation lists when an obituary for such voter is published online by a funeral home located in the county.

[*Note:* Continuing law requires a county election officer to remove a registered voter from the registration books and party affiliation lists when an obituary notice reporting the death of such voter appears in a newspaper having general circulation in the county.]

***Poll Workers and Election Board Judges or Clerks***

The bill would prohibit county election officers from disqualifying active military members and such members' spouses and other dependents from service as poll workers on the basis of residency or registered voter status. The bill would also add U.S. citizenship and Kansas residency as requirements for service as an election board judge or clerk.

[*Note:* Continuing law requires all election judges and election clerks to be residents of the area served by the voting place in which they are a judge or clerk.]

The bill would define "active military member" for poll worker purposes as any person with full-time duty status in the armed forces of the United States, including members of the national guard and reserve.

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\*Conference committee report briefs are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. No summary is prepared when the report is an agreement to disagree. Conference committee report briefs may be accessed on the Internet at <https://klrd.gov/>

## ***Soliciting Advance Voting Ballot Applications***

Current law provides the requirements for any person who solicits by mail a registered voter to file an application for an advance voting ballot and includes an application for an advance voting ballot in such mailing. The bill would make the following amendments to these requirements:

- Remove the requirement that the name of the president, chief executive officer, or executive director be included in the mailing, if an organization is causing such solicitation to be mailed;
- Require the name and address of the individual or organization causing such solicitation to be mailed and the required disclosure statement—"Disclosure: This is not a government mailing. It is from a private individual or organization"—to be included on one page within the mailing instead of both on the exterior of the mailing and on each page contained within the mailing;
- Change the required font size for such information from 14-point or larger to 10-point or larger;
- Clarify the requirement that the advance voting ballot application must be the official application provided by the Secretary of State or the appropriate county election office [*Note: Current law states the advance voting ballot application must be provided by the Secretary of State.*];
- Modify the requirement prohibiting any portion of an advance voting ballot application from being completed prior to mailing to allow the date of the election to be printed on the application prior to being mailed to registered voters; and
- Replace the requirement that the advance voting ballot application include an envelope addressed to the appropriate county election office with a requirement that the advance voting ballot application include information on how to mail such application to the appropriate county election office.

## **Conference Committee Action**

The Conference Committee agreed to the provisions of HB 2016, as amended by the Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs.

The Conference Committee further agreed to add the contents of HB 2018, as amended by the House Committee on Elections, regarding qualifications for poll workers and election board judges or clerks, and to add the contents of SB 231, as introduced, regarding the solicitation of advance voting ballot applications.

## **Background**

### ***HB 2016 (Voter Registration Rolls)***

The bill was introduced by the House Committee on Elections at the request of Representative Waggoner.

#### *House Committee on Elections*

In the House Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by representatives of the Office of the Secretary of State and the Kansas County Clerks and Election Officials Association. The proponents generally stated the bill would allow county election officers to use multiple sources to confirm the death of a registered voter and ensure that voter registration rolls are up-to-date.

Written-only proponent testimony was provided by two private citizens.

Written-only opponent testimony was provided by a representative of the American Civil Liberties Union of Kansas.

No other testimony was provided.

#### *Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs*

In the Senate Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by a representative of the Office of the Secretary of State, who stated that because obituaries are appearing less in newspapers and more online, the bill would fill in gaps by allowing county election officers to use multiple sources to confirm the death of a registered voter and maintain voter registration rolls.

Written-only proponent testimony was provided by three private citizens.

No other testimony was provided.

The Senate Committee amended the bill to change the effective date to upon publication in the *Kansas Register*. [Note: The Conference Committee did not retain this amendment.]

### ***HB 2018 (Poll Workers and Election Board Judges or Clerks)***

The bill was introduced by the House Committee on Elections at the request of Representative Waggoner on behalf of a constituent.

#### *House Committee on Elections*

In the House Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was presented by representatives of Bird Dog Recruitment and Consulting, Military Officers Association of America, and Secure

Families Initiative. The proponents generally stated the bill would allow military members and their families that maintain residence in their home state to serve as poll workers like military members and families that choose to move their residency to where they are stationed, and the bill would help address the shortage of poll workers the state is facing.

Written-only proponent testimony was submitted by two private citizens.

A representative of the Office of the Secretary of State (Secretary) presented neutral testimony, stating the Secretary has no issue with the premise of the bill and requesting an amendment to strike the reference to the Secretary qualifying poll workers, as the Secretary does not have that authority.

A private citizen presented **opponent** testimony, expressing concerns that allowing certain privileges for military members and their families historically has been the precedent to other nationwide voting practices, such as mail-in ballots.

Written-only opponent testimony was submitted by three additional private citizens.

No other testimony was provided.

The House Committee amended the bill to:

- Require election board judges and clerks to be U.S. citizens;
- Require election board judges and clerks to live in Kansas;
- Remove a requirement the election board clerk or judge live within the area served by the voting place in which they are to be a clerk or judge;
- Remove a requirement the election board clerk or judge have the qualifications of an elector in the election at which they serve; and
- Remove language prohibiting the Secretary of State from prohibiting the disqualification of poll workers.

[*Note:* The Conference Committee retained the above-described amendments.]

### ***SB 231 (Soliciting Advance Voting Ballot Application)***

The bill was introduced by the Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs at the request of Senator Thompson. Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs

In the Senate Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by a representative of the Office of the Secretary of State, who provided information on the 2021 legislation establishing the requirements for soliciting registered voters to submit an application for an advance voting ballot and the lawsuit that arose from the legislation. The representative stated the bill would retain requirements concerning mandatory disclosures while also reducing the burden when soliciting voters to apply for an advance mail ballot.

Written-only opponent testimony was provided by a representative of the Health Forward Foundation.

No other testimony was provided.

## **Fiscal Information**

### ***HB 2016 (Voter Registration Rolls)***

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on HB 2016, as introduced, the Secretary of State indicates it would use existing resources to update training materials for local election officials and update educational and promotional materials for the public regarding the provisions of the bill.

The Kansas Association of Counties indicates enactment of the bill would have a fiscal effect associated with investigating the legitimacy of private obituaries, which would increase the election officers' workload.

Any fiscal effect associated with the bill is not reflected in *The FY 2026 Governor's Budget Report*.

### ***HB 2018 (Poll Workers and Election Board Judges or Clerks)***

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on HB 2018, as introduced, the Secretary indicates the bill would not have an effect on agency operations. The Kansas Association of Counties also indicates enactment of the bill would not have a fiscal effect on counties.

### ***SB 231 (Soliciting Advance Voting Ballot Application)***

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on SB 231, the Secretary of State indicates it would use existing resources to provide training and update manuals for county election officials, update the agency's website, and update public documents and information.

The Kansas Association of Counties indicates enactment of the bill could have a fiscal effect on counties if applications received by the county election offices are incomplete or unreadable, which would require additional staff time to assist voters in completing their applications, but is unable to estimate a fiscal effect.

Any fiscal effect associated with enactment of the bill is not reflected in *The FY 2026 Governor's Budget Report*.

Elections; voter registration; poll workers; election board judge; election board clerk; advance voting ballot applications; Secretary of State; county election office  
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