

MINUTES OF THE SENATE ETHICS AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Vicki Schmidt at 9:30 a.m. on March 11, 2009, in Room 446-N of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Mike Heim, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Ken Wilke, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Martha Dorsey, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Reed Holwegner, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Carolyn Long, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Paul Degener, Citizens Against Illegal Immigration, Topeka
Tom Stoffers, November Patriots
Richard Fry, November Patriots
Michael Byington, Kansas Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Others attending:

See attached list.

The Chair welcomed those in attendance and re-opened the hearing on **SB 267–Elections; voters; voter identification changes.**

Paul Degener, Citizens Against Illegal Immigration, Topeka, an opponent of this legislation, presented testimony (Attachment 1) indicating that even though he was designated as an opponent to this bill he is not opposed to the bill, but does not feel the language in the proposed legislation is sufficient to solve the current problem concerning voter fraud. Mr. Degener told the committee that he would support stronger legislation requiring photo identification each time at the polls.

Tom Stoffers, representing the November Patriots, a neutral conferee, referenced several newspaper articles advocating the requirement of a picture identification for voting purposes.

Richard Fry, also representing the November Patriots, reinforced the need for stronger voter identification and recommended legislation containing stronger language requiring photo identification at each and every election (Attachment 2).

Also speaking as a neutral conferee, Michael Byington, Kansas Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (Attachment 3) indicated the Association was not in favor of mandatory identification requirements as they place an undue burden on those who have difficulty handling and keeping track of identification due to physical or visual disabilities; feeling that first time voter identification requirements are adequate. He supports the bill as written.

The Chair thanked all in attendance.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for March 12, 2009.