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- Thank you to the Senate committee for their leadership and for the opportunity to speak.
- KanVote is a statewide campaign with participating organizations in 6 cities across Kansas. Our mission is to defend voter rights as well as educate the public on new changes to voter requirements and keep them engaged in the electoral process.
- Today I am not only speaking on behalf of myself and KanVote, I am speaking for the 3,500 Kansans who signed this petition to oppose rushed implementation of proof of citizenship requirements for voter registration.
- Since the SAFE Act (aka Voter ID) took effect on January 1st of this year, KanVote has engaged the public in meeting the new requirements to vote. Every step of the way we have encountered administrative failures.

Administrative Failures of Voter ID

- **1/3/2012 – Failure at the Election Office:** The Sedgwick County Election Office failed to provide the affidavit voters must fill out to receive a free voter ID. Election office workers stated that the affidavit had not been published by the Secretary of State's office.
- **1/10/2012 – Failure at the Department of Motor Vehicles:** Under the SAFE Act, the DMV is required to provide free photo IDs to voters who sign an affidavit. People in Wichita went to the local DMV to determine their eligibility for a free photo ID for the purpose of voting. They were segregated from the rest those doing business at the DMV, addressed as a group by a DMV supervisor, and were not allowed to address their individual questions with DMV employees. The DMV supervisor explained that other DMV employees would not be able to help them. The DMV supervisor was not able to answer questions of eligibility and deferred them to other agencies. No one was able to obtain a free photo ID for the purpose of voting.
- **1/10/2012 – Functional Poll Tax Discovered:** Kansas Department of Revenue requires proof of citizenship in order to obtain a state photo ID. The SAFE Act requires the state of Kansas to provide free birth certificates to those who need them *for voter registration purposes only*. The SAFE Act does not provide free birth certificates for those who are in need of photo ID. In other words, those who need a free photo ID for the purposes of voting must first pay for a birth certificate.

KanVote communicated concern regarding what seemed to be a functional poll tax to Brad Bryant, State Elections Director within the office of the Kansas Secretary of State. Bryant confirmed that free birth certificates would not be made available until January 1st 2013.

- **1/26/2012 – Failure at the Secretary of State's Office:** KanVote exposed the functional poll tax to Secretary of State Kris Kobach at a hearing regarding SAFE act rules and regulations held at his office. Kobach stated that there was confusion created by this committee's delay in implementation of proof of citizenship requirements, the free birth certificates were available for the purposes of obtaining a free photo ID, and that only members of his staff were fully aware of their availability. Brad Bryant was seated next to Kobach on the hearing panel.
- **2/28/2012 – Failure at the Polls:** Wichita held a referendum vote that was the first test of the photo ID requirements in a major city. The media reported considerable technological glitches as well as instances of election workers refusing to accept photo IDs approved by the SAFE act including government employee IDs, military IDs, and IDs from state universities. Several voters who lacked photo ID were forced to cast provisional ballots.
- **Our experience with Voter ID indicates that we still have a lot to learn. For that reason we feel that this committee should stick to the original plan to make time for adequate preparation for these new requirements.**

Agencies Unprepared for Expedited Proof of Citizenship Requirements

- **Department of Motor Vehicles:** The National Voter Registration Act requires DMVs to offer voter registration to its clients. In order to comply with the National Voter Registration Act and the SAFE Act, the DMV must transfer proof of citizenship documents to election offices along with voter registration information. The DMV is currently undergoing a \$40 million technological overhaul in order to be able to transmit the documents electronically. It is unclear whether or not the project will be completed by June 15th.
- **Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS):** SRS is also subject to NVRA. In addition, Kansas state statute designates SRS as a Voter Registration Agency. Kansas Voter Registration Agencies are required to assist clients with voter registration as well as submit registration information to election offices. KanVote contacted an official within the Office of the Secretary of SRS to ask what SRS was doing to prepare for the pending proof of citizenship requirement. The official stated that to his knowledge no preparations, such as a system to transmit proof of citizenship documents to election offices, have been taken as of March 2012.