

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mark Kahrs at 1:30 pm on Wednesday, January 14, 2015, 281-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Randy Powell – Excused

Committee staff present:

Cindy Lash, Legislative Research Department

Martha Dorsey, Legislative Research Department

June Christensen, Kansas Legislative Committee Assistant

Daniel Yoza, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Mike Heim, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Kris Kobach, Kansas Secretary of State

Others in attendance:

[See Attached List](#)

Opening Remarks

Chairman Kahrs called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm and welcomed those present.

Members and Staff Introductions

Chairman Kahrs had committee members and staff introduce themselves, their districts, and if they were new to the committee. Staff members Martha Dorsey, Cindy Lash, Mike Heim, Daniel Yoza, and June Christensen, committee secretary, were introduced.

Review of Committee Rules

Chairman Kahrs distributed copies of the *Committee Rules* and *Conferee Rules* for the upcoming session and announced that meetings will begin promptly at 1:30 pm

Possible Bill introductions

Secretary of State Kobach said he will be introducing two bills for consideration - one that will address a straight-ticket vote for elections and the other regarding filling vacancies. No numbers have been assigned yet.

Presentation by:

Chairman Kahrs introduced Kris Kobach, Kansas secretary of state, to present the 2014 election statistics. Secretary Kobach introduced staff members Brad Bryant, Bryan Caskey, Eric Rucker, and Moriah Day. He presented an overview of the election results, specifically the comparison with previous years' records. ([Attachment 1](#)) ([Attachment 2](#)). Voting percentage was 51 percent, slightly over his prediction of 50 percent. This percentage was higher than the surrounding states: Oklahoma, 41 percent; Missouri, 35 percent; and Nebraska, 48 percent. Colorado has gone to a complete mail-in ballot system with an approximate 57 percent return. The transition to photo identification and

CONTINUATION SHEET

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increased mail-in ballot security are fully implemented and appeared to work well. Of the 570 provisional ballots that lacked photo ID, 267 completed the identification process, leaving 303 votes that were not counted. He also reported on the results of the new and re-elected candidates, noting that there were three close elections statewide. He presented information about the multi-state voter fraud verification system and said the results will be finalized in February. The report will be provided to the committee at that time.

Secretary Kobach stood for questions from committee members regarding voter fraud and ways to detect it, incomplete voter numbers, spring elections, the mail-in ballot process success, and fraud possibility.

Announcements:

Chairman Kahrs announced that there will be no meeting on Monday, January 19, and the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 21. Legislative Research will make a presentation on the legislation passed in the last two years. There will also be a joint meeting next week with the Senate Elections and Ethics Committee, chaired by Senator Mitch Holmes, and will be about moving spring elections. Further information will be provided.

Adjournment

Chairman Kahrs expressed appreciation for those attending and adjourned the meeting at 2:20 p.m.