

TESTIMONY OF CLAY BARKER

IN SUPPORT OF HB2213

February 12, 2015

As Executive Director of the Kansas Republican Party for four years I have gained a working knowledge of campaign finance in Kansas. I have observed two trends

- (1) Some contribution limits for candidates have not changed since the 1970s but the number of voters in each district and the cost of getting a candidate's message out to the voters has become much more expensive.
- (2) While entities organized under IRS Code Section 501(c)(4) and 527 (PACs and non-party 527s) have been around for years and have always participated in elections, in the past few years, their influence and amount of spending has increased substantially. Moreover, all non-party organizations can form a network and coordinate their efforts.

The result of these two trends is that candidates are having a more difficult time getting their own message out. One operative in Colorado said something to the effect of "the candidates have become bit players in their own campaign, we control their message, they might as well stay home."

We cannot allow this trend to take hold in Kansas. I strongly recommend that the campaign contribution caps for all candidates be increased to reflect the new reality.

I generally support the concept of Section 1(c) which allows candidates to accept contributions during the primary cycle for both the primary and general election cycles. This would allow the candidate who wins the primary to immediately spend funds on the general election rather than spend the weeks following the campaign focusing only on fundraising.

My only concern is ensuring proper procedures and accounting for funds and return of extra funds by those who lose a primary election.