

HOUSE BILL No. 2162

By Committee on Elections

1-30

1 AN ACT concerning the secretary of state, relating to ballot language
2 statements.

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4 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:*

5 Section 1. (a) A county election officer may request the preparation of
6 a ballot language statement for the purposes of explaining the language of
7 a ballot question of any municipality as defined by K.S.A. 75-6102, and
8 amendments thereto.

9 (1) If the ballot question language was derived from a petition
10 submitted to the office of the county attorney, district attorney or county
11 counselor pursuant to K.S.A. 25-3601, and amendments thereto, such
12 county election officer shall request the office of the county attorney,
13 district attorney or county counselor, as applicable, to prepare the ballot
14 language statement in compliance with the requirements of subsection (a)
15 (3).

16 (2) If the ballot question language did not derive from a petition
17 submitted to the office of the county attorney, district attorney or county
18 counselor pursuant to K.S.A. 25-3601, and amendments thereto, such
19 county election officer shall request the office of secretary of state to
20 prepare the ballot language statement in compliance with the requirements
21 of subsection (a)(3).

22 (3) A ballot language statement shall fairly and accurately explain
23 what a vote for and what a vote against the measure represents. Such ballot
24 language statements shall be true and impartial statements of the effect of a
25 vote for and against the measure in language neither intentionally
26 argumentative nor likely to create prejudice for or against the proposed
27 measure. A ballot language statement shall be prepared and transmitted in
28 good faith and without malice.

29 (b) (1) Within 15 days of a request by a county election officer to
30 prepare a ballot language statement pursuant to subsection (a)(1), the
31 office of the county attorney, district attorney or county counselor, as
32 applicable, shall prepare and forward such ballot language statement to the
33 office of secretary of state for approval by the secretary of state or the
34 secretary of state's designee that such ballot language statement complies
35 with the requirements of subsection (a)(3). Within five days following the
36 receipt of the ballot language statement, the office of secretary of state

1 shall furnish the county election officer with the ballot language statement
2 as approved by the office of secretary of state as in compliance with the
3 requirements of subsection (a)(3).

4 (2) Within 15 days of a request by a county election officer to prepare
5 a ballot language statement pursuant to subsection (a)(2), the secretary of
6 state or the secretary's designee shall prepare and forward such ballot
7 language statement to the office of the attorney general for approval by the
8 attorney general, or any assistant attorney general, that such ballot
9 language statement complies with the requirements of subsection (a)(3).
10 Within five days following the receipt of the ballot language statement, the
11 office of the attorney general shall furnish the county election officer with
12 the ballot language statement as approved by the office of the attorney
13 general as in compliance with the requirements of subsection (a)(3).

14 (c) A ballot language statement prepared under this section shall be:

15 (1) Posted in each polling place, but shall not be placed on the ballot;

16 (2) provided to registered voters voting by advance ballot. Such ballot
17 language statement shall not be placed on the ballot when provided to a
18 registered voter voting by advance ballot; and

19 (3) made available for public inspection in the office of the county
20 election officer. A ballot language statement prepared under this section
21 may be posted on the official website of the county.

22 (d) There shall be no cause of action at law or in equity challenging
23 the validity of the form of a ballot language statement prepared under this
24 section. There shall be no liability on the part of and no cause of action of
25 any nature shall arise against the attorney general, any assistant attorney
26 general, the secretary of state, the secretary of state's employees, the
27 county election officer, the county attorney, the district attorney or the
28 county counselor as a result of the preparation of a ballot language
29 statement under this section. The preparation of a ballot language
30 statement shall not form any basis for an election contest or result in the
31 waiver of any immunity by the state or any of its subdivisions.

32 Sec. 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its
33 publication in the Kansas register.