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STATE OF KANSAS

Senate Committee on Ethics, Elections and Local Government

Testimony on HB 2256

Bryan A. Caskey, Director of Elections
Kansas Secretary of State's office

March 22, 2017

Madam Chairwoman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2256. I am testifying as a proponent on part of this bill and neutral on part of this bill.

The Secretary of State's office is in favor of adding to the crime of electioneering, the gathering of signatures or otherwise circulating a petition, regardless of the subject matter, at any polling place on Election Day, or advance voting location when voting is occurring. It has come to our attention, this practice has been done several times at locations throughout the state. This office believes the purpose of the polling place is to cast your vote without undue influence, or distraction. Petition circulators may add confusion to voters on why they are at the polling place, and what cause or candidate the circulators are promoting. Removing petition circulators from the polling place will eliminate this confusion.

This office would like to recommend an amendment to this bill to make it register effective, when the bill is worked. Making the bill register effective, would possibly allow this bill to become law prior to the April 11th Congressional Vacancy Special Election.

The Secretary of State's office does not have an opinion on the rest of the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill, and I stand for any questions.