

**Shawnee County
Office of the County Counselor**



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**TESTIMONY ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF SHAWNEE COUNTY, KANSAS TO THE SENATE ETHICS, ELECTIONS AND LOCAL
GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE ON SB 229**

February 12, 2018

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

I am Jim Crowl, the Shawnee County Counselor, and I want to thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners of Shawnee County in support of SB 229.

In four counties, including Shawnee County, there is an Elections Commissioner that is appointed by the Secretary of State. In 101 Counties, elections are managed by an elected County Clerk. In every County, the budget for elections is funded by the County. As a legislative body, you certainly understand the need for oversight of public resources and the need to make tough decisions when allocating limited public funds. You have been elected by the citizens of this State to make those tough decisions. In Counties, the County Commissioners are elected by County voters to make those tough decisions. The fact that Elections Commissioners are appointed by the State and funded by the County does raise questions regarding who and how this important oversight function is to occur.

Shawnee County supports SB 229 because it will provide needed clarity regarding who should be exercising oversight over an Elections Commissioner. Because the County is required to fund the budget of the Elections Commissioner, the County should appoint and exercise oversight over the position. If the State wishes to continue to appoint this position, then we would respectfully request that the State fund the budgets of the Elections Commissioners. The current system where one governmental entity appoints while the other funds the position is broken and causes needless confusion for all involved.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.