



2018 - 2019 Executive Board

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February 19, 2019

Honorable Kansas State Representative William Sutton
Chair, Senate Ethics, Elections and Local Government Committee and Distinguished Members of the Committee

Re: House Bill 2092, relating to voter registration

Chairman Sutton and Distinguished Committee Members,

I am the Harvey County Clerk and Election Officer and chair of the elections committee of the Kansas County Clerks and Election Officials Association (KCCEOA). I am submitting this letter on behalf of the KCCEOA membership. I thank you for your time in considering our opinions and for recognizing the presence of the multiple KCCEOA members in attendance at your committee meeting on Wednesday, January 30.

The KCCEOA prepared a legislative agenda which was developed through a policy committee process and agreed to by a majority of the members. The idea of same day registration was not included in the policy platform this year, but it is an idea which has received considerable discussion. The KCCEOA members are willing to give this idea more consideration through our legislative policy platform process. That would mean proposing the idea to the full body at our May meeting, hearing the specific concerns of the members, then working through the association committee process to determine the viability of the issue and how to address the concerns and roadblocks presented. If those hurdles can be cleared and a majority of the membership is satisfied that the issue has enough merit to move forward, then we can bring it to a vote at the fall meeting of the KCCEOA and add it to our policy platform.

If it is the will of the legislature to act on this issue during this legislative session, we can offer a few insights immediately:

- We believe that the provisional process may be the easiest way to achieve same-day registration without posing a serious administrative burden. Some individual members have provided testimony suggesting amending components of the bill to resolve inconsistencies and standard the process so that all non-registered voters would vote provisionally.
- Any change which allows voters direct access to the ballot counted in the polling place is practically impossible to administer from the standpoint of assuring a voter is not voting more than once in the same election.
- Any attempt to change state law with regard to same day registration should take into consideration the paramount security of the voter's identity and the secrecy of their ballot.
- The Secretary of State's Office should be allowed broad authority to adopt rules and regulations regarding same day voter registration.
- The legislature should also consider how polling place staff would verify that new registrants meet the residency requirements currently in state law. The time frame that registrants would be allowed to provide proof of residence, if not provided when registering and voting, would also need to be considered.
- The legislature must further know that there is a potential unfunded mandate from any same day registration changes; more staff will be needed in polling places to manage the provisional process, especially as it pertains to residency verification.

The KCCEOA opposes HB 2092 in its current form, but the association looks forward to working with the legislature on this issue.

Sincerely,

Rick Piepho
Harvey County Clerk & Election Officer – KCCEOA Elections Committee Chair