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STATE OF KANSAS

Testimony on HB2579 (Proponent)

Senate Committee on Transparency and Ethics
Wednesday, March 9, 2022

Chairwoman Bowers and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to speak in favor of HB2579.

HB2579 requires campaign finance reports for all candidates to be filed electronically with the Secretary of State's online filing system. This bill saves staff hours by eliminating the scanning, reviewing, and processing of paper campaign finance reports, and reduces the possibility of human errors. Most importantly, HB2579 provides instant transparency of all campaign filing reports.

Currently, statewide campaigns may electronically file by directly entering campaign finance report data or uploading the report. Once the campaign finance report is uploaded to the filing system, a copy is sent to the Kansas Governmental Ethics Commission for their review and processing. A filed campaign finance report is thereby immediately accessible by the public. HB2579 promotes transparency in campaign finance reporting and efficiency in state government operations.

During previous testimony before the Committee, our office offered the following proposals to address several concerns:

1. Construct a working group to receive and share input, offer training and tutorials, and coordinate adjustments to the software. It is a priority of our office to make significant upgrades to the system within next few years, and we look forward to working alongside stakeholders to improve the user's experience.
2. If there are concerns with immediately implementing mandatory e-filing, set a future date when improvements to the system must be completed and training provided to the users.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments to the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Clay Barker
Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
General Counsel