

MINUTES OF THE SENATE ETHICS AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Vicki Schmidt at 9:30 a.m. on February 25, 2009, in Room 446-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator David Wysong- excused

Committee staff present:

Mike Heim, Office of the Revisor of Statutes

Ken Wilke, Office of the Revisor of Statutes

Martha Dorsey, Kansas Legislative Research Department

Reed Holwegner, Kansas Legislative Research Department

Carolyn Long, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Clancy Holeman, Riley County Counselor

Brad Bryant, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Elections and Legislative Matters

Others attending:

See attached list.

The meeting was called to order by the Chair who opened the hearing on **SB 268–Elections; military personnel; voting by electronic mail** by asking staff for an explanation of the bill. This bill would allow members of the armed forces, along with members of their families, to register to vote, request absentee ballots, and vote by electronic mail as outlined in the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act.

Clancy Holeman, Riley County Counselor, appeared in support of **SB 268** on behalf of the Board of Riley County Commissioners. He explained that at the present time it is an election official who interprets e-mail requests for ballots to be the same as a “faxed” request and that the language contained in this bill would provide uniformity and guidance (Attachment 1).

Senator Wagle asked if verification of signature was required. Mr. Holeman responded that the voters signature would be electronically scanned and that this was implied on line 36-37 of the bill.

Brad Bryant, appearing on behalf of the Secretary of State, spoke in favor of the bill as it expands voting opportunities for a group of voters who often are in situations that make it very difficult to vote. Additionally, the Federal Voting Assistance Program recommends this procedure and supports this legislation. He also stated that in Kansas federal ballots are treated the same as all ballots and are accepted until the polls close on election day (Attachment 2).

Written testimony in support of **SB 268** was submitted by:

Bruce L. Newby, Election Commissioner, Wyandotte County Election Office (Attachment 3).

There being no further conferees the hearing on **SB 268** was closed.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2009.