

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jene Vickrey at 3:30 P.M. on March 16, 2006 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Barbara Craft- excused
Representative Lynne Oharah- excused

Committee staff present:

Mike Heim, Legislative Research Department
Martha Dorsey, Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes Office
Maureen Stinson, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Rep. Mike O'Neal
Dave Kerr
Allyn Lockner
Sheriff Randy Rogers, Kansas Sheriff's Association
Randall Allen, Kansas Association of Counties
Kim Winn, League of Kansas Municipalities
John Pinegar, Kansas Legislative Policy Group
Secretary Joan Wagon, Kansas Advisory Council on Intergovernmental Relations
Terry Holdren, Kansas Farm Bureau
Nancy Weeks, Kansas County Officials Association
Marvin Smith
Greg Dye

Others attending:

See attached list.

Chairman Vickrey opened the hearing on:

SB 379 **Consolidation of municipalities**

Rep. O'Neal testified in support of the bill (Attachment 1). He said the proposed legislation removes statutory barriers to voluntary mergers and reorganizations at the local level between and among local officials who recognize the fiscal savings and administrative efficiencies that such actions foster for themselves and the taxpayers they represent.

Dave Kerr testified in support of the bill (Attachment 2). His Power Point presentation asked the question, "Does Kansas Have Too Much Government?"

Allyn Lockner testified in support of the bill (Attachment 3). He said the proposed legislation is forward-moving and responds to regional, national, and international economic realities.

Randall Allen testified in support of the bill (Attachment 4). He said the proposed legislation removes obstacles and impediments to cities and counties in their quest to provide the most efficient and effective local government possible for their citizens.

Kim Winn, League of Kansas Municipalities, testified in support of the bill (Attachment 5). She said the proposed legislation would allow cities and counties, and their residents, to determine their own local government organizations, and will allow them to maximize efficiencies in government as well as modernizing governmental structures in Kansas.

Christy Caldwell, Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce, submitted written testimony in support of the bill (Attachment 6).

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House Governmental Organization and Elections Committee at 3:30 P.M. on March 16, 2006 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

John Pinegar, Kansas Legislative Policy Group, testified in support of the bill (Attachment 7). He said the bill provides the necessary mechanism for local units of government to achieve efficiencies in governance and economies in the delivery of governmental services and retain local control.

Joan Wagon, Secretary of Revenue, testified in support of the bill (Attachment 8). She said the Kansas Constitution leaves the issue of local government boundaries entirely in the hands of the Kansas Legislature, and to date, there is no enabling legislation which would allow various local governments to merge.

Terry Holdren, Kansas Farm Bureau, testified in opposition to the bill (Attachment 9). He requested an amendment to include a heightened approval process for consolidations between cities and counties. He said their membership fully supports the dual majority, and would support other systems for approval as long as they ensure adequate protection for residents living outside the boundaries of the city.

Nancy Weeks, Kansas County Officials Association, testified in opposition to the bill (Attachment 10). She said they support language in the bill that would require a separate vote to eliminate elected officials.

Sheriff Randy Rogers, Kansas Sheriffs Association testified in opposition to the bill (Attachment 11). He said they support an amendment to require a dual majority approval requirement. He said they also would support an amendment requiring that the consolidation issue be publicized in the official newspaper of the taxing authorities that are wishing to consolidate.

Marvin Smith testified in opposition to the bill (Attachment 12). He said any consolidation for cities and unincorporated areas should have a dual vote approval.

Greg Dye testified in opposition to the bill (Attachment 13). He said that consolidation legislation in the past allows for the elimination of elected office.

Questioning of the conferees will take place at the Tuesday, March 21, 2006 meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Rep. Lane made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 14, 2006 meeting. Rep. Sawyer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Chairman Vickrey adjourned the meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 21, 2006.