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Office of the Crawford County Clerk

February 21, 2012

Honorable Kansas State Senator Dennis Pyle
Chairman, Senate Ethics, Elections and Local Government Committee
and Distinguished Members of the Committee

Re: Senate Bill 211, Concerning City & School Elections

Chairman Pyle and Distinguished Committee Members,

As Chairman of the Elections Legislation Committee for the Kansas County Clerks and Election Officials Association, I thank you for your time in allowing me to testify on this bill. The KCCEOA last year adopted a resolution that opposes moving the City and Schools Elections from the spring of even-numbered years to the fall of odd-numbered years. We have identified several issues that must be considered prior to making such a change.

By moving these elections to coincide with other federal, state and local elections we will have to print two ballots to include all the races. This will make it much easier for mistakes to be made at the polling place by both election workers and by voters. This also makes it more difficult to verify the number of ballots voted when performing audits. The number of races will make it more difficult for voters to be able to study issues when making their choices. There are other issues that need to be brought to a public election periodically and it is important to have one general election per year to avoid the need for several special elections for sales tax, bonds or other issues. We also feel that holding elections every two years will make it much harder to recruit and retain experienced poll workers. This will be another factor that will cause election errors to increase.

The Kansas County Clerks and Election Officials work hard to make sure that Kansas Elections are administered in a professional manner. We oppose this bill because we feel that the resulting elections will be much harder to manage and there will be problems at the polls. We ask that you carefully consider these factors in making your decision on this matter. Thank you for allowing me to testify and for allowing me to share the reasons that I do not support this change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald P. Pyle". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Donald P. Pyle
Crawford County Clerk and Election Officer
countyclerk@ckt.net