

February 6, 2017

Chairman Elaine Bowers

Kansas Ethics, Elections and Local Government Committee

Re: Testimony SB-37, Election handling

Thank you, Chairman Bowers, and Committee for this opportunity to provide testimony in opposition of SB-37 today.

Over the last few years, Kansas has committed state resources and tax payer dollars to implementing procedures which result in making voting more difficult, confusing, and at times out of reach of Kansas voters.

Last year, during a voter registration effort in Southwest Kansas, we discovered that voter reference guides in Spanish were incorrect, giving some voters bad information about the process. This was a black eye for Kansas, and thankfully resulted in changes. This occurred because changes made at the insistence of Secretary of State Kris Kobach were not reflected within all materials provided by the Secretary of State. SB-37 represents another change to the voting practice, a rebuff of court rulings which will no doubt result in continued cost to the state, but also leads to likely voter confusion, or even legal requirements not being met by the Secretary of State's office.

Changes to our election process, as provided in SB-37 do not exist in a vacuum. Implementation of such changes will incur a cost to the state, legal and administrative, as well as a price that will be paid in voter confusion.

I would strongly encourage members to reject SB-37.

Thank you for your consideration,

Chris Reeves,
Scott City, KS