



To: Senate Ethics and Elections Committee, Chairwoman Senator Elaine Bowers, Vice Chair, Randall Hardy, Ranking Minority Senator David Haley, and members of the committee.

From: The League of Women Voters of Kansas, Cille King, Co-President

RE: SB149 – Facilitating voter registration by providing certificates of birth for applicants to evidence citizenship upon their consent. – Opposing

Date: January 29, 2020

The League of Women Voters of Kansas opposes SB149 in regard to requiring proof of citizenship to register to vote. District Judge Julie Robinson on June 18, 2018 (Fish v. Kobach and Bednasek v. Kobach), found that requiring proof of citizenship to register to vote is in violation of both the 14th amendment – equal protection under the law, and the National Voter Registration Act. The Judge noted that requiring proof of citizenship may have the inadvertent effect of eroding, instead of maintaining, confidence in the electoral system given the confusing, evolving, and inconsistent enforcement of the DPOC laws since 2013.

SB149 only supports locating one form of proof of citizenship - birth certificates. It does not include locating other forms of proof of citizenship such as Naturalization documents, Native American Tribal Identification, consular report of birth abroad of a citizen, copies of lost U.S. Passports, etc. Supporting only one of several forms of proof of citizenship is discriminatory.

SB149 is costly to Kansas government. There is an annual fiscal note of \$459,000 for the Department of Revenue. Costs were not researched for county election offices, the Secretary of State, or any other governmental office that might be involved.

SB149 would make the voter registration form much more complicated. Adding the additional 21 lines under Section 1.(b)(15) and the additional boxes for the applicant and department would probably mean that the voter application form could not fit on one page.

There are very few ineligible voters who are registered to vote, as found during the Fish v. Kobach trial. The Kansas Voter Registration Application contains the warning: “If you submit a false voter registration application, you may be convicted and sentenced to up to 17 months in prison.” There is punishment for those who falsely register to vote.

Instead of further government requirements, The League of Women Voters of Kansas respectfully **requests the removal of laws that remain in statute requiring proof of citizenship to register to vote.**

The League of Women Voters of Kansas asks that you vote NO on SB149.