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January 31, 2018

Honorable Kansas State Senator Elaine Bowers
Chair, Senate Ethics, Elections and Local Government Committee and Distinguished Members of the Committee

Re: House Bill 2333, Concerning Election Audits

Chairman Bowers and Distinguished Committee Members,

I am the Harvey County Clerk and Election Officer and chair of the elections committee of the Kansas County Clerks and Election Officials Association (KCCEOA). I am submitting this letter on behalf of the KCCEOA based on the consensus opinion of the members regarding the individual components of this bill. I thank you for your time in considering our opinions and for recognizing the presence of the multiple KCCEOA members in attendance at the hearing on HB 2333 on Wednesday, January 24.

The KCCEOA supports the bill in its current form with a few exceptions. We agree that an audit of each election will provide proof of the integrity of the process and increase public confidence in the results.

We believe that the audit should be conducted on a small random sampling of the total precincts and races with the ability to increase the number of precincts or races audited if irregularities are found in the initial audit, just like financial audits are conducted using a random selection of a few accounts and expanded if needed. Auditing a small portion of the overall results should provide sufficient proof of the accuracy and integrity of the tabulation process while keeping the cost to each county for conducting the audits at a minimum. We agree that since odd numbered year elections do not normally contain federal or state races, auditing of a few randomly selected local races (county, city or school board) should be allowed.

We strongly agree that we should be allowed to schedule the canvass on any business day, up to the 13th day after the election, especially with the addition of conducting an audit prior to the canvass. This flexibility would allow us to schedule the canvass to coincide with a regularly scheduled county commission meeting.

The Office of the Secretary of State normally consults with members of our organization when preparing election related rules and regulations. We look forward to assisting them in preparing and adopting rules and regulations governing the conduct and procedure of election audits. We support the Secretary of State's recommendation to amend the implementation date of this bill to January 1, 2019.

The portion of this bill regarding the requirements for electronic voting systems are acceptable as presented. Currently all of the new voting equipment available to purchase meets the suggested requirements.

We support passing HB 2333 in its current form, but suggest that an amendment be made to allow auditing of a few randomly selected local races and to change the date of implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rick Piepho".

Rick Piepho
Harvey County Clerk & Election Officer – KCCEOA Elections Committee Chair