

SB 142 Veto Message from the Governor

We have a rich tradition in Kansas of working to increase citizen participation in our democracy. This bill claims to advance that tradition, but sadly, it does not.

There are elements in this bill I believe should be law, such as the increased reporting requirements during the period before an election. To demonstrate my commitment to openness, I pledge to follow this proposal by self-reporting contributions over \$350 during the so-called “blackout period” at the end of the election. I urge other candidates to do the same.

I would eagerly sign real campaign finance reform that increases reporting requirements for candidates, parties and third-party groups. But this bill includes too many other objectionable elements, and it completely ignores the impact of shadowy third-party groups on our democracy.

I wholeheartedly embrace efforts to prevent voter fraud, which is why I’m glad to hear from county election officials that there is no conclusive evidence suggesting there is voter fraud taking place with advance ballots.

Voting has become easier and more convenient in our state as a result of initiatives like advance voting, but this bill would move us in the wrong direction. At a time when many communities are reducing the number of polling places and encouraging Kansans to advance vote, this bill would make it harder to cast a ballot. Sedgwick County, for example, plans to cut the number of polling places in the county from 208 to 62, increasing the barriers for elderly, disabled, and low-income voters, and making advance voting even more important. Adding forms and affidavits to read and sign will confuse voters and very likely cause many to not vote.

In addition to wanting to make it easier to vote, most Kansans would also agree we don’t need more money in politics. That’s why raising the contribution limits for candidates running for the Legislature, as proposed here by legislators, is a bad idea.

If the Legislature sends me real campaign finance reform, I will sign it. This bill is not real reform.

Therefore, pursuant to Article 2, Section 14 of the Constitution of the State of Kansas, I veto SB 142.

Date: May 24, 2006

Signed: Kathleen Sebelius, Governor