

SESSION OF 2010

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON SENATE BILL NO. 542

As Amended by Senate Committee on
Ethics and Elections

Brief*

SB 542 deals with the dates of primary and general elections in selected statutes. The bill would eliminate the April general and related primary elections in four statutes' definitions of general and primary elections. In those same four statutes, the bill would change the definition of "primary election" from the first Tuesday in August to the second Tuesday in September. The four statutes affected are the following:

- KSA 25-1115, dealing with advance voting;
- KSA 25-2006, relating to school district elections;
- KSA 25-2102, for city elections; and
- KSA 25-2502, a general application definition.

Background

Senator Ty Masterson and Representative Aaron Jack testified in favor of the original bill, the intent of which was to eliminate spring elections altogether and move them to the fall. The proponents cited increased voter awareness and participation and decreased costs for elections as their reasons for supporting the bill. The opponents, including representatives of the Kansas Association of School Boards and the League of Kansas Municipalities, mentioned concerns regarding the partisan nature of fall elections, as well as the

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

lack of media coverage for city elections if they were combined with statewide and federal elections conducted at the same time. A representative of the Kansas Secretary of State's Office testified neutrally, explaining additional amendments would be needed to accomplish the bill's intent.

The amendment of the Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections eliminated many sections of the bill needed to accomplish the bill's intent of moving all elections to the fall, and the amendment moved the fall primary election from August to September in the four statutes cited.

According to the fiscal note on the original bill, passage of the bill would increase election costs in even-numbered years, but the elimination of spring elections would create a net savings, though the savings are inestimable. There would be no effect on the state budget.