

**Written Testimony before House Elections Committee
in Support of Senate Bill 102
by Carol Williams, Executive Director
March 14, 2012**

The portion of Senate Bill 102 concerning increases in fees paid into the Commission's fee fund is a recommendation made by the Governmental Ethics Commission in its 2011 Annual Report and Recommendations.

As background information, the Commission became a fee agency in 1991. The legislature established a fee fund for the Commission to provide supplemental funding for additional staff and other operating expenditures necessitated by legislation which brought all county and first class city candidates under the purview of the Campaign Finance Act. Fees were increased by the Kansas Legislature in 1994 and again in 2000.

Over the past decade, approximately one-third of the Commission's operations have been funded through the agency's fee fund. Recently, the Legislature has begun to use more and more of the Commission's fee fund to offset general fund appropriations. This year, 38% of the agency's operations will be funded through the fee fund. In FY 2013, 40% of the agency's appropriations will be funded through its fee fund. If fees are not increased, the Commission's fee fund will be depleted in FY 2015.

Fee increases are found in Sections 1, 2, and 3 of SB 102. Reviewing the attached chart, the fees currently paid by candidates for the legislature, candidates for county office, first class city office, state board of education, district attorney, and district court judges would increase by \$40, going from the current \$35 to \$75. There would be a \$510 increase in the fees paid by candidates running for statewide office. The attached chart shows the various increases in fees for lobbyists and political action committees.

SB 102 was amended in the Senate Election Committee to raise the threshold for itemizing campaign contributions on a receipts and expenditures report for candidates, PACs, and party committees. Current law requires contributions over \$50 to be itemized. Section 4 of SB 102 would raise that threshold to any contribution over \$100 be itemized.

Several amendments were made to provisions of the State's lobbying laws.

Section 5 of SB 102 eliminates the requirement for lobbyist affidavit filers to file a year-end wrap-up report. Section 6 of the bill moves the due date for lobbyists employment and expenditures reports from the 10th day of the month to the 15th day of the month for the months reports are required to be filed. Section 7 of SB 102 requires the date a lobbying expenditure is made to be disclosed on a lobbyist employment and expenditures report; exempts from itemization, a meal event to which all members of a legislative committee is invited; and requires only the primary sponsor or sponsors of a special event to itemize such expenditures.

To sustain the Commission's current level of operations past FY 2014, the Commission urges your support for the fee increase provisions of SB 102. The Commission takes no position on the Senate Elections Committee amendments made to SB 102.

Increase In Fees Credited To The Governmental Ethics Commission Fee Fund

Filing Fees for Candidates for these offices:

Candidates Affected	Current Amount	Proposed Amount	Additional Revenue Generated By Fee Increases	
			FY 2013	FY 2014
Governor & Lieutenant Governor	\$480	\$1,000	-0-	\$1,560
Other Statewide Offices	\$480	\$1,000	-0-	\$6,240
State Senator, State Representative, State Board of Education, District Attorney, Elected District Court Judges, Elected County Offices, Members of governing bodies of cities of the 1 st class, Members of Boards of Education of unified school districts having 35,000 or more pupils, Board of Public Utilities of the City of Kansas City	\$35	\$75	\$6,640	\$20,560
Additional Candidate Fee Revenue			\$6640	\$28,360

Fees paid by political committees per calendar year:

Political Committees Affected	Current Amount	Proposed Amount	Additional Revenue Generated By Fee Increases	
			FY 2013	FY 2014
Anticipated Receipts of \$2501 or more	\$240	\$400	\$16,000	\$19,200
Anticipated Receipts of more than \$500 but less than \$2500	\$35	\$70	\$2,625	\$2,275
Anticipated Receipts of \$500 or less	\$20	\$40	\$1,900	\$1,600
Additional Pac Fee Revenue			\$20,525	\$23,075

Fees paid by Registered Lobbyists per calendar year:

Lobbyists Affected	Current Amount	Proposed Amount	Additional Revenue Generated By Fee Increases	
			FY 2013	FY 2014
Anticipated spending of \$1,000 or less on behalf of any one employer (per employer)	\$35	\$50	\$14,625	\$14,625
Anticipated spending of more than \$1,000 on behalf of any one employer (per employer)	\$300	\$400	\$15,000	\$15,000
Employee of lobbying group or firm (not an owner or partner)	\$360	\$450	\$1,800	\$1,800
Additional Lobbyist Fee Revenue			\$31,425	\$31,425