

MINUTES OF THE SENATE ELECTIONS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Senator Janice Hardenburger at 1:30 p.m. on February 9, 2000, in Room 529-S of the Capitol.

All members were present:

Committee staff present: Dennis Hodgins, Legislative Research Department  
Mike Heim, Legislative Research Department  
Ken Wilke, Revisor of Statutes  
Graceanna Wood, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Stan Larson, Past Chairman, State Extension Advisory Council  
Jim Linqvist, Northeast Kansas Area Extension District  
Bill Fuller, Kansas Farm Bureau  
Rebecca Bossemeyer, Geary County Clerk  
Lonie Addis, Labette County Commissioner  
Rebecca Bossemeyer, Geary County Clerk

Chairman Hardenburger opened the hearing on **SB 535 concerning extension districts; and repealing the existing section.** Presently, the extension council members are appointed. **SB 535** would require council members to be elected by the public.

Stan Larson, Past Chairman of the State Extension Advisory Council (SEAC) and Chair of the SEAC Committee, who is in favor of the bill, presented testimony to the Committee that the Extension election Committee made a recommendation to the SEAC that the county Extension elections be patterned after the method prescribed in the Kansas Extension District Law and in the manner provided by law for general county elections. (Attachment #1)

Chairman Hardenburger asked Mr. Larson to expand on the Extension District Law. Mr. Larson said, the Extension District Law allows counties to join together as one extension unit, rather than being separate counties. Also, the County Extension Law gives these two counties taxing authority as well as budgeting authority and are governed by four individuals elected at the general election from each of the participating counties.

Chairman Hardenburger asked Mr. Larson if after achieving an elected council, would the next step be to ask for the ability to levy taxes. Mr. Larson advised the Committee that there would not.

Chairman Hardenburger advised the Committee that the fiscal note states that there would be no additional expense to the state. The cost of an election would be the responsibility of the counties.

Dr. Jim Linqvist gave testimony to the Committee endorsing the changes proposed by the State Extension Advisory Committee in the County Extension Council Law. He said this would allow a more representative election process with more participation by the voting public, a four year term for Council members and greater local programming flexibility and an assurance that the knowledge K-State Research and Extension delivers through county extension programs would reflect the priorities of local citizens. (Attachment #2)

The Committee discussed if there was a problem getting people to agree to serve, and if the people elected would or would not be on an advisory committee.

Bill Fuller, Associate Director, Public Policy Division Kansas Farm Bureau who is in favor of the bill, informed the Committee this would authorize County Extension Councils to appoint three or more program development committees rather than mandating the four specific program committees contained in current law. This would allow counties to match extension programs to the actual needs of each county. (Attachment #3)

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Rebecca Bossemeyer, Geary County Clerk, presented testimony expressing her concerns regarding County Election Officials being required to conduct elections for the Extension Council, as proposed in **SB 535**. (Attachment #4)

The Committee discussed if there would be additional expense for balloting.

Lonie R. Addis, Labette County Commissioner and President, Kansas County Commissioners Association, expressed concerns about the current proposals in **SB 535**, such as expense which would be incurred by counties in the new election process and the subsequent taxing authority that the proposed Council could eventually gain. (Attachment #5)

The Committee discussed whether to amend the bill to require county option. Questions arose such as: if it went statewide, would there be more information on how it is working, and whether it is increasing participation in the county where the extension in that county changed, based on increased awareness of what the Extension can do, and if there is an urgency in the proposal.

Chairman Hardenburger closed the hearing on **SB 535** and encouraged more dialog between the principals, to provide some additional guidance to the Committee for a solution.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m. Next meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2000.



Unless specifically noted, the individual remarks recorded herein have not been transcribed verbatim. Individual remarks as reported herein have not been submitted to the individuals appearing before the committee for editing or corrections.

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