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STATE OF KANSAS

House Committee on Elections

Testimony on HB 2539

Bryan A. Caskey, Director of Elections
Kansas Secretary of State's office

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2539. I am testifying as a proponent on this bill.

The Secretary of State's office is in favor of adding minimal requirements to candidates running for statewide office. Currently the Kansas Constitution in Article 2, Section 4, sets requirements for members of the Kansas Legislature. The Constitution states "During the time that any person is a candidate for nomination or election to the legislature, and during the term of each legislator, such candidate or legislator shall be and remain a qualified elector who resides in his or her district". There are currently no Kansas constitutional requirements or legislative requirements for candidates and officeholders for statewide elected office similar to those for legislative office. The Secretary of State's office believes it is appropriate to add similar requirements to statewide offices, and also believe this would not place an undue hardship on persons wanting to file and hold those offices.

The Secretary of State's office also believes it is imperative to make this bill effective after the 2018 elections. The Secretary of State does not want there to be any appearance of a conflict of interest concerning persons who are currently candidates and do not meet these proposed requirements. The current language in the bill is sufficient.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill, and I stand for any questions.