

SESSION OF 2018

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2539

As Amended by House Committee of the Whole

Brief*

HB 2539, as amended, would amend the qualifications for candidacy for several statewide elected offices. The bill would require every candidate for the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, State Treasurer, and State Commissioner of Insurance be a qualified elector of Kansas. The bill also would require a candidate for the office of the Attorney General to be licensed to practice law in Kansas.

The bill would take effect January 1, 2019.

Background

The bill was introduced by Representative Carpenter.

In the House Committee on Elections hearing, Representative Carpenter provided proponent testimony stating currently Kansas law includes no age or residency requirements for candidates for Governor or Lieutenant Governor. The Director of Elections (Director), Office of the Secretary of State, also appeared as a proponent, testifying in favor of adding minimal age and residency requirements for candidates for statewide elected offices. The Director stated the effective date of the bill should be after the 2018 elections so as to avoid a conflict concerning current candidates who may not meet these requirements.

A current candidate for the Office of the Governor provided opponent written-only testimony to the House Committee, which stated the bill would discourage political participation and block potentially qualified candidates based on age.

*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>

No further testimony was provided.

The House Committee voted to pass the bill without recommendation.

The House Committee of the Whole amended the bill to require a candidate for the office of Attorney General to be licensed to practice law in Kansas. The House Committee of the Whole also amended the bill to remove the four-year residency requirement for candidates for the Office of Governor and Lieutenant Governor present in the bill as introduced.

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill as introduced, enactment of the bill would have no fiscal impact.