



GOVERNMENTAL ETHICS COMMISSION

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Neutral Testimony Regarding SB 299
Mark Skoglund, Executive Director

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding SB 299. Unless a legislative item is directly considered at a Commission meeting, KGEC testimony is typically neutral, as it is today.

The Commission provides this testimony to give additional context to the fiscal note to this legislation.

DIRECT COST

Outside of salaries and wages, the largest categories of the agency's budget are printing and postage, which fluctuate depending on the electoral cycle. These categories include printing and sending campaign finance handbooks, expenditure reports, error and omission notices, and failure to file notices. The largest single cost arises from sending failure to file notices, since those notices must be sent through registered mail. Based upon comparable local elections, the average candidate costs the Kansas Governmental Ethics Commission approximately \$21.56 per electoral cycle.

Currently, the Kansas Campaign Finance Act and KGEC's jurisdiction extends to one school district. This legislation would increase that jurisdiction to another 20 school districts, with 3 more on the cusp of crossing the 5,000 student jurisdictional threshold. Based upon the prior two electoral cycles, this would add 157.5 school board candidates per cycle.

The Kansas Campaign Finance Act and KGEC's jurisdiction currently does not extend to any community college Board of Trustee election. This legislation would increase that jurisdiction to cover all 19 community colleges. Based upon the prior two electoral cycles, this would add 108 community college trustee candidates per cycle.

Therefore, the direct cost to the agency is approximately \$5,556 per two-year electoral cycle. The agency would intend to split this cost to the extent possible across the two year budget in future cycles, but the first year of enforcement would not provide that opportunity.

STAFFING COST

KGEC has one position focused on local campaign finance coordination, reviews, audits, and enforcement.

This legislation would affect odd-numbered elections. For context, the number of candidates running in odd-numbered years is below:

	2013	2015	2017	2019
Number of Candidates	154	153	228	247

The number of candidates in odd-numbered elections is trending upwards. This legislation would add an average of 265.5 candidates to our local campaign finance coordinator's responsibility in these years, more than doubling the current workload. KGEC estimates an additional 1.0 FTE would reasonably handle this increase without impacting other areas of responsibility. Funding this position, including benefits, is estimated at \$52,100 in FY21.