



UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW • Suite 1150 • Washington, DC 20425 www.usccr.gov

April 14, 2017

The Honorable Sam Brownback
Governor of Kansas
300 SW 10th St.
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Governor Brownback:

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is pleased to transmit to your office our Kansas State Advisory Committee's report *Voting Rights and the Kansas Secure and Fair Elections (SAFE) Act*, which can be found at:

<http://www.usccr.gov/pubs/KS-Voting-Rights-Report.pdf>

The Commission maintains 51 Advisory Committees - one for each state and the District of Columbia. The role of the Committees is to study civil rights issues in their communities and report findings and recommendations to the Commission. The Commission appreciates the Kansas Advisory Committee's focused attention on the civil rights impact of the state's 2011 Secure and Fair Elections (SAFE) Act, and its requirements that (1) individuals provide documentary proof of citizenship when registering to vote; and (2) voters present photographic identification in order to cast their ballot at the polls.

The Commission requests that your office review the recommendations that can be found in the report, and advises that you further investigate identified areas of concern within your jurisdiction, and take appropriate action to address them.

We have similarly asked state legislature leadership, the Congress, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission to review the report's recommendations (copies attached).

The Commission appreciates your consideration of the report's recommendations, in the hope of improving civil rights. We look forward to hearing from you after you have reviewed the recommendations in the report on what actions you will take in response. You may contact Brian Walch at 202-376-8371, or bwalch@usccr.gov, with any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CEL', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Catherine E. Lhamon, Chair

cc: Adam Nordstrom
Washington Representative
State of Kansas
500 New Jersey Ave. NW, Ste. 400
Washington, DC 20001

Encl. Kansas Advisory Committee Report
Letter to Kansas legislature leadership
Letter to U.S. Congress
Letter to U.S. Department of Justice
Letter to U.S. Election Assistance Commission



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April 14, 2017

Senator Susan Wagle
President, Kansas State Senate
300 SW 10th St.
Topeka, KS 66612

Representative Ron Ryckman
Speaker, Kansas House of Representatives
300 SW 10th St.
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear President Wagle and Speaker Ryckman:

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Catherine E. Lhamon, Chair

cc: Susan Kannarr, Clerk of the House (via email)
Cory Carnahan, Secretary of the Senate (via email)

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April 14, 2017

The Honorable Charles Grassley
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
135 Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Diane Feinstein
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
331 Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
2309 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
2426 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Grassley, Chairman Goodlatte, Ranking Member Feinstein, and Ranking Member Conyers:

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The Commission requests that your offices review the recommendations that can be found on pp. 38-41 of the report, as well as in the stand-alone "Recommendations" document attached to this letter. In response to these recommendations, we advise that you take the steps necessary to protect civil rights within your jurisdiction.

We have similarly asked Governor Brownback, Kansas legislative leadership, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission to review the report's recommendations (copies of letters attached).

The Commission appreciates your consideration of the report's recommendations, in the hope of improving civil rights. We look forward to hearing from you after you have reviewed the recommendations in the report on what actions you will take in response. You may contact Brian Walch at 202-376-8371, or bwalch@usccr.gov, with any questions or concerns.

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Catherine E. Lhamon, Chair

cc: The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader
The Honorable Paul Ryan, Speaker
The Honorable Charles Schumer, Minority Leader
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader

Encl. Kansas Advisory Committee Report
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Voting Rights and the Kansas Secure and Fair Elections Act

Recommendations to the United States Congress

- The Congress should establish a working committee to study the impact of the 2013 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Shelby County v. Holder* including a review of any changes in state voting laws and related changes in voter participation since the ruling;
- According to the results of this study, the Congress should develop an updated formula to identify which states require continued review under the Voting Rights Act, and introduce appropriate legislation to implement the new formula; and
- The working committee should then conduct an analysis of the feasibility and potential impact of establishing a uniform, national voter registration system.



UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

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April 14, 2017

Mr. Tom Wheeler
Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Av. NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Mr. Wheeler:

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is pleased to transmit to your office our Kansas State Advisory Committee's report *Voting Rights and the Kansas Secure and Fair Elections (SAFE) Act*, which can be found at:

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Voting Rights and the Kansas Secure and Fair Elections Act

Recommendations to the U.S. Department of Justice

- The Voting Rights Division should conduct a thorough review of the requirements imposed under the Kansas SAFE Act to assess their compliance with applicable federal law including but not limited to: the Voting Rights Act, the Help America Vote Act, and the National Voter Registration Act; and
- If such a review reveals areas of noncompliance or conflict with federal law, then the Division should take appropriate enforcement action to correct them.



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April 14, 2017

The Honorable Matthew Masterson
Chairman
U.S. Election Assistance Commission
1335 East West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Masterson:

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