



STATE OF KANSAS OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Testimony: 2020 Election Overview

Senate Transparency & Ethics Committee

Wednesday, January 13, 2021

Chairwoman Bowers, members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the 2020 elections.

Going into 2020, we knew it would be a challenging year for our office. Not only was there a presidential election, Kansas also had a rare open seat for the U.S. Senate, competitive congressional races and both chambers of the Kansas Legislature up for election. Then came the coronavirus pandemic which created unique challenges, not present in prior elections. Under normal circumstances, local election officials have a difficult task and the uncertainty with COVID-19 only compounded their challenges. Concerns were raised on whether there would be adequate poll workers, polling places sometimes canceled at the last moment, election staff were on quarantine, voters raised concerns about personal safety if voting in-person and on the reliability of the USPS if voting by mail. County election workers, however, rose to the challenge displaying remarkable flexibility and were steadfast in their diligence to successfully administer the 2020 elections amidst a global pandemic.

Our office worked closely with federal, state and local officials to monitor the developments with COVID-19. It was imperative we moved forward in a coordinated manner that adhered to state and federal laws; was achievable for all Kansas counties; equitable for our diverse population; and protected the health and well-being of the Kansas electorate and election workers. Although adjustments had to be made to account for coronavirus, no substantial changes were made to Kansas election procedures. Most importantly, all options for how to vote remained unchanged – which was critical to preventing voter confusion.

Kansas received \$4.6 million in federal CARES Act funds that had to be used in 2020 to limit the impact of COVID-19 on the elections. Over \$1 million of that funding was used to provide personal protection equipment (PPE) kits, plexiglass shields and disposable stylus pens for all polling places in Kansas. Anheuser-Busch donated 559 gallons of hand sanitizer and 2,237 eight ounces bottles of hand sanitizer to the local election officials for the 2020 elections. Additionally, \$2.4 million of the funding was spent to reimburse counties for unexpected elections expenses related to the pandemic.

Unlike many states which struggled to implement mail balloting for the first time, Kansas' election system has 25 years of experience with mail ballots and has developed the institutional knowledge, procedures, and infrastructure to securely process the anticipated increase in mail ballot use at the general election. The Kansas election system's ability to handle the surge in mail ballots in the 2020 election demonstrates the election system's capabilities.

Kansas voters should also be commended for their participation in the 2020 elections. Kansans exercised their right to vote in historic numbers. Voters were proactive in requesting advance by mail ballots and, also, in returning them. Voters who chose to cast their ballots in-person, whether it be through advance voting or on election day, exceeded figures from previous elections. Additionally, Kansans answered the call to action and volunteered to work as poll workers in the 2020 elections. Most Kansas counties reported that they met all election worker needs in their respective counties for the first time in several years.

Ultimately, the 2020 elections reaffirmed Kansas is a voter friendly state where voters have multiple options for how to cast their ballot safely and securely. Despite historical challenges, local election officials went above and beyond in preparing for and executing the 2020 elections. Voters were able to vote the same as they have been able to in previous elections – through advance by mail ballot, advance in-person voting or in-person on election day.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott Schwab
Kansas Secretary of State

Attachments: 2020 Primary Election Overview (08.2020)
2020 General Election Overview (11.2020)
Letter to the Legislature Regarding Dominion Voting Systems (11.2020)

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STATE OF KANSAS

TO: Kansas Legislature
FROM: Office of Kansas Secretary of State
DATE: November 16, 2020
SUBJECT: Dominion Voting Systems

Our office has received inquiries from members of the Kansas Legislature regarding Dominion Voting Systems. At a time where misinformation about the 2020 general election is prevalent, we felt it was imperative to provide you with accurate information to ensure continued trust in the safety and security of Kansas elections.

Despite the global pandemic, the 2020 general election went exceedingly well in Kansas. This success can be directly attributed to our 105 local election officials who worked tirelessly to implement COVID-19 precautions, recruit additional poll workers, and, most importantly, ensure voters could safely and securely cast their ballot. If you have not already contacted the election officials in your respective districts to thank them for their hard work, we encourage you to do so.

Much of the misinformation surrounding the election stems from online claims involving Dominion Voting Systems (Dominion). Dominion is a vendor that provides election equipment to 28 states, including Kansas. The accusations against Dominion vary but include serious allegations of having close association with partisan political operatives to software glitches causing votes to switch. State election officials take these claims seriously and work with federal and state authorities to investigate such claims. At this time, there is no evidence to support these charges in Kansas and it appears domestic bad actors are promoting this misinformation to sow distrust in the 2020 election results.

All U.S. voting systems must provide assurance they work accurately and reliably as intended under federal U.S. Election Assistance Commission and state certification and testing requirements. Before any voting system, equipment or software may be purchased or used by a county in Kansas, it must be certified by the Secretary of State. Manufacturers and vendors apply directly to the Secretary of State to have their systems reviewed and certified. There are multiple election safeguards - from testing and certification of voting systems, to canvassing and auditing - preventing malicious actors from tampering with vote counts and ensuring final vote tallies are accurate.

Additionally, the 2020 primary and general elections were the first major statewide elections in which post-election audits were performed in Kansas. As of today, we can report that all 105 counties in Kansas successfully completed their post-election audits from the November general election. All votes have been accounted for and foul play, of any kind, was not found. As the policy makers for the State of Kansas, you should be commended for having the foresight to implement post-election audit legislation that provides additional safeguards to help ensure the trustworthiness of our elections.

Thank you for your continued service to the State of Kansas. If we can be of service to you or your respective district, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Stay well,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott Schwab".

Scott Schwab
Kansas Secretary of State