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STATE OF KANSAS

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KOBACH'S COLUMN

Kansas Secretary of State Kris W. Kobach

Elections at the national and state level are administered by the Kansas Secretary of State's office. But the rubber meets the road at the county level. Kansas's county clerks and election commissioners are the people who ensure that our elections run smoothly. I personally want to acknowledge our county clerks and election officials and thank them for carrying out their duties faithfully.

Yesterday I joined them in Salina at the spring conference of the Kansas County Clerks' and Election Officials' Association. Several staff members from the Secretary of State's office updated the association members on a variety of topics.

My focus was on the newly enacted Secure and Fair Elections Act (S.A.F.E. Act). Many of our Kansas county clerks testified in favor of the legislation before it became law. And all of our county clerks have shown great preparedness to roll up their sleeves and do the work to ensure that the new voting rules go into effect smoothly in 2012. Several have agreed to serve on a S.A.F.E. Act Implementation Task Force to draw up forms and determine best practices and guidelines for all 105 counties. The creation of an implementation task force is one of the ways my agency and the county election officers will cooperate in making sure the new law is implemented seamlessly throughout the state.

Other topics at the Salina conference were handled by my capable staff. Brad Bryant, Deputy of Elections and Legislative Matters, covered 2011 bills, constitutional amendments, and the roll of poll workers and various state agencies in implementing the S.A.F.E. Act. Bryan Caskey, Assistant State Election Director, explained U.S. Census Data, redistricting, the Election Voter Information System (EL.V.I.S.), and reporting issues. Josh King, Special Programs Coordinator, discussed H.A.V.A. funding and auditing required by the Help America Vote Act, polling place and voting machine equipment issues. A great deal of activity takes place behind the scenes to ensure that our elections run smoothly. Our agency is well-served by these election and legislative professionals.

Kansas is blessed with some of the most professional and talented county clerks in the country. I urge Kansans to take the time and compliment their respective county clerks on the great job that they do.

Your Secretary of State,
Kris Kobach

P.S. To report voter fraud call our hotline at 800-262-8683 or visit www.sos.ks.gov and click on the "Report Voter Fraud" Quick Link on the bottom right of the screen.