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## STATE OF KANSAS

### NEWS RELEASE

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### Election and Campaign Finance Legislation HB 2080 to Governor

TOPEKA (May 13, 2011) – On a vote of 35 to 1 in the Senate and 120 to 0 in the House of Representatives, HB 2080 passed yesterday with overwhelming bipartisan support. This elections and campaign finance bill contains multiple issues, many of which have been introduced by the office of the secretary of state.

“Passage of this bill and others originating from the secretary of state’s office make this legislative session the most successful for election issues in the past decade,” said Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach. Here are some of the substantial achievements of the new law.

- 1) Kansas will save over \$1,300,000 next year by postponing the next presidential preference primary election to the year 2016. This bill makes way for the parties in Kansas to organize caucuses to allow Kansas citizens to communicate their preference for a presidential candidate. Similar caucuses were successfully organized in 2008.
- 2) Despite complications caused by redistricting, Kansas military personnel and citizens residing overseas will receive absentee ballots in accordance with federal timing requirements. Potential lawsuits brought by the U.S. Department of Justice will be avoided.
- 3) Local elections for school board members, city officers and community college trustees will cost less by reducing the number of primary elections required by law. If there are three or fewer qualified candidates no primary will be held and all advance to the general election. If more than three, a primary will be held and the top two candidates advance to the general election.
- 4) Campaign financing reporting is simplified for state candidates by eliminating the requirement to file a report in the office of the county election officer of the county in which the candidate is a resident. Now such report only has to be filed with the office of the secretary of state instead of two places.
- 5) Challengers for elected office in Kansas will not be disadvantaged by incumbents appearing or named in a public service announcement or advertisement during campaign season. That timeframe is 60 days before any primary election in which the candidate’s name appears on the ballot and ending with the conclusion of the general election.
- 6) An orderly process is established when a senator is appointed to fill a vacant seat midterm. If a vacancy occurs on or after May 1 of the second year of the term, the appointed senator may hold the office for the remainder of the term. If prior to May 1, the senator may hold the office until the next general election.

“Reducing costs while improving the election process and promoting fairness is a substantial accomplishment,” commented Kobach. “I appreciate the cooperation and efforts of the legislature in moving the bills that my office has proposed.”