KRIS W. KOBACH Secretary of State



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NEWS RELEASE

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S.A.F.E. Law Photo ID Report

TOPEKA (February 29, 2012) – Ten elections have taken place in Kansas since the Secure and Fair Elections law became effective on January 1, 2012. As of that date, Kansas voters have to show one of eight types of photographic identification to vote, or be eligible for one of five exemptions. To vote by mail, either a driver's license number or a copy of valid photo ID must be included with the ballot application.

Secretary of State Kris Kobach observed elections in Cimarron, Roeland Park, and Wichita. "I'm very pleased with the successful implementation of Kansas's S.A.F.E. Act," he said. "Many poll workers and voters were enthusiastic about the changes," said Kobach, "sharing such comments as 'It's long overdue!"

The photo ID security measures have proven to work smoothly. Critics of the tighter procedures have claimed that a large number of Kansans do not have valid identification and thus will be unable to vote.

With over 30,000 votes cast under the new requirements, less than one-tenth of one percent of voters did not bring a photo ID to the polls. (And some of them indicated that they had a valid ID but were making a political statement in protest of the law by not showing it.)

Some critics also claimed that the photo ID requirement would suppress voter turnout. But in nearly all of these local elections voter turnout was higher than normal.

"The predictions made by critics of the law have been proven incorrect," said Kobach. "Complying with this law has been easy for Kansas voters. This is not surprising, since carrying a photo ID is part of American life in 2012."

In addition to securing each legal vote, the photo ID has resulted in quicker check-in times. Where polling locations use paper poll books, the ID shows the proper spelling of the voter's name. Where electronic poll books are used, the driver's license can be scanned to pull up the voter registration record much faster.

For details about the changes in election law, visit www.gotVoterID.com.