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STATE OF KANSAS

NEWS RELEASE

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Kansas First in World and First in Nation to Send Electronic Apostille Certificate

TOPEKA (November 19, 2013) – Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach is pleased to announce that last month Kansas was the first state in the United States to send an e-Apostille to another country on behalf of a constituent. Six years ago, Kansas was the first in the world to transmit a trial e-Apostille.

An Apostille is a certificate that authenticates the origin of a public document such as a birth, adoption, marriage or death certificate, a judgment, an extract of a register, articles of incorporation, a diploma, a college transcript or a notarial attestation. An Apostille is issued by a designated public official in the jurisdiction where the signature was notarized so that a foreign country will formally accept the document. In Kansas the designated public official is the secretary of state.

As part of the electronic Apostille Pilot Program, Kansas was “the first jurisdiction in the world to send a paperless Apostille Certificate – an official document authenticating the origin of a public document – to another State. The receiving State was Colombia, which in turn officially indicated its acceptance of the e-Apostille, making the two jurisdictions ready to complete such authentications entirely electronically.” ([Press Release](#) 15 February 2007, Hague Conference on Private International Law.)

Fast-forward to October 24, 2013, when Dr. Fabio Rodriguez of Overland Park, Kansas, came to the secretary of state’s office. He needed to send survival verification documents to his country of Colombia, proving that he is still alive, so that he could continue receiving pensions and Social Security benefits earned there. Rodriguez has traveled to Topeka for this purpose four times a year for many years to obtain a paper Apostille. When Colombia decided that every six months would suffice, it also required that one of the two times each year must be through a Colombian consulate. That meant Rodriguez and his wife would have to travel either to Chicago or to Washington D.C. to keep getting earned benefits.

“And so I exposed the situation in Bogota saying that it was complicated for us because every time we have to pay two tickets, we have to pay hotels, so at least we spend \$1000 going back and forth between Kansas City and Chicago,” said Rodriguez. “Besides that I have to make a specific appointment with the consulate for a specific date. So it is not easy.” Colombia decided Rodriguez would not have to visit a consulate, with the condition that the secretary of state sends the Apostille through electronic means in order to circumvent forgery.

“Dr. Rodriguez is fortunate that the e-Apostille system was already set up in Kansas so that his family can save time and energy while enjoying dramatic cost savings and a level of security which far exceeds the paper-only Apostille standards,” Kobach said. “And it is amazing that the first actual e-Apostille issued in the United States was sent by Kansas to Colombia, the same two countries that sent and received the first successful international e-Apostille test.”

Rodriguez has been on the faculty of the University of Missouri-Kansas City for ten years and became a U.S. citizen in 2008.