# INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

## Minutes of the 5th Meeting of the 2026 Interim

## October 20, 2026

**Call to Order and Roll Call**
The fifth meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on State Government was held on October 20, 2026, at 11:00 AM ET/10:00 AM CT in Room 154 of the Capitol Annex. Representative DJ Johnson, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

**Present were:**
Members: Representative DJ Johnson, Co-Chair; Senator Michael J. Nemes, Co-Chair; Representative David Hale, Co-Chair; Senators Cassie Chambers Armstrong, Keturah J. Herron, Scott Madon, Amanda Mays Bledsoe, Robby Mills, Steve Rawlings, and Lindsey Tichenor; and Representatives Shane Baker, Josh Branscum, Beverly Chester-Burton, Jennifer Decker, Anne Gay Donworth, Al Gentry, Peyton Griffee, Erika Hancock, Thomas Huff, Mary Beth Imes, Matthew Koch, Chris Lewis, Matt Lockett, Savannah Maddox, Marianne Proctor, Rebecca Raymer, T.J. Roberts, Aaron Thompson, James Tipton, Nick Wilson, and Susan Witten.

Guests: Trey Grayson, Former Secretary of State, Kentucky County Clerks Association; John Steffen, Executive Director, Kentucky Registry of Election Finance; Jennifer Scutchfield, Assistant Secretary of State; and Michael Callan, Deputy Elections Director, Office of Secretary of State.

LRC Staff: Shannon Tubbs, Daniel Carter, Jesse Farler, Christina Gordley, and Peggy Sciantarelli.

**Approval of Minutes - September 15, 2026 Meeting**
A motion was made by Representative Lockett and seconded by Representative Tipton to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2026, meeting. Minutes were approved by voice vote without objection.

**Update on Implementation of 2026 RS HB 139 - AN ACT relating to elections and declaring an emergency**

Trey Grayson testified on behalf of the Kentucky County Clerks Association. He discussed HB 139 provisions impacting county clerks, including reporting requirements; qualifications, duties, and training of poll workers; removal of noncitizens from voter registration records; voter identification requirements; and post-election audits.

In response to Representative Roberts, Mr. Grayson stated that the penalties described in HB 139 would not apply to poll workers performing their duties in an election.

In response to Senator Herron, Mr. Grayson deferred to the State Board of Elections (SBE) about the requirement that the Administrative Office of the Courts send SBE a list of persons convicted of a felony.

In response to Representative Proctor, Mr. Grayson stated that the ability to print ballots "on demand" is one possible solution to address confusion that can result when precincts are split and could reduce the risk of handing out incorrect ballots.

In response to Representative Donworth, Mr. Grayson discussed an incident in Fayette County when a group of persons attempting to vote were mistakenly declared noncitizens. It is his understanding they were not prevented from voting.

In response to Representative Chester-Burton, Mr. Grayson discussed the problem of voters being assigned to the wrong precinct through clerical error or mistakes in mapping of county boundaries.

In response to Co-Chair Hale, Mr. Grayson and Representative Decker discussed the petition process for adjusting county boundary lines. Co-Chair Nemes explained how that process differs from annexation. Chair Johnson stated that the confusion regarding county boundary lines will be addressed in the 2027 Regular Session.

John Steffen, Executive Director, Kentucky Registry of Election Finance, discussed HB 139 provisions relating to the Registry.

He spoke first about enactment of 26 RS HB 136, relating to campaign finance. HB 136 allows the use of campaign funds to pay the cost of security measures for a state candidate, officeholder, member of his or her family, and employees of a candidate's campaign or officeholder's office.

Mr. Steffen said HB 139 increased campaign contribution limits for anonymous contributions, cash contributions, contributions to individual candidates and executive committees, and caucus campaign committees. Contribution limits to individual

candidates increased to now match the federal contribution limit. Mr. Steffen also stated there are some issues with the amount of additional days to file reports that may have been unintended.

In response to Senator Mills, Mr. Steffen clarified that the individual contribution limit to county or state party executive committees increased from $5,000 to $10,000. Legislators are already allowed to give $5,000 to their party from their own campaign funds.

In response to Co-Chair Nemes, Mr. Steffen stated that a person can donate $3,500 to a candidate from their personal account and $3,500 from their campaign account.

Jennifer Scutchfield, Assistant Secretary of State, was in attendance and invited to speak. Michael Callan, recently appointed Deputy Elections Director, accompanied her. Ms. Scutchfield said HB 139 has minimal impact on their office. They work closely with SBE and county clerks and appreciate being involved in process improvements. She briefly discussed the election-related forms process, filing deadlines for write-in candidates, and post-election audits.

Senator Herron expressed concern about the requirement for AOC to provide SBE a list of persons convicted of a felony. She requested that this information be provided also to the State Government Committee.

**Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned.