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**DINAH H. SYKES**  
SENATE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

Chairman Olson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my written opposition to SB 388 and SB 389.

The freedom to choose our leaders and to use our voices to influence projects within our communities is foundational to American democracy. Creating barriers that make it more difficult for someone to vote – no matter how big or small the restriction – makes each of us a little less free.

The bills being considered today undermine our democracy in two critical ways: SB 388 would create an arbitrary and unnecessary restriction that will significantly limit voters' ability to assure their ballot is counted in an election. And SB 389 creates further administrative hurdles for our already stretched-thin election officials in the service of perpetuating and legitimizing a lie that serves no one except those who wish to further disenfranchise their fellow Americans.

No voter should sit out an election because they didn't have a safe and accessible option for casting their ballot. Voting by advance ballot is one of those options, and our state was a leader in 2020 in using those ballots while maintaining a secure and efficient process. Secretary of State Scott Schwab testified to that effect multiple times last session as this body attempted to create new obstacles for voters under the guise of "election security."

Ballot drop boxes – which would not be allowed as a ballot collection method under SB 388 – are a safe, reliable option that increase accessibility for many voters. Speaking to the House Elections committee earlier this week, Secretary Schwab shared that his office continued to receive November 2020 ballots well into March of 2021, while ballots submitted via drop box are received the same day. Thousands of Kansas voters used drop boxes in 2020 and 2021 because they are a safe, convenient way to ensure your vote is counted.

There is no reasonable explanation for taking away this option for Kansas voters, unless disenfranchisement is the goal. And given the intent of SB 389, disenfranchisement and disillusionment are not unfathomable explanations. By requiring election offices to use paper