



March 6, 2023

To: Representative Pat Proctor, Chair
House Committee on Elections

From: Brenda R. Sharpe, President and CEO
The REACH Healthcare Foundation

Subject: Senate Bill 208 – Restrictions on Remote Ballot Boxes

Dear Chairman Proctor and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on SB 208, which proposes to eliminate all use of remote ballot boxes. The REACH Foundation opposes elimination of ballot boxes given Kansans' record of using these boxes to participate in voting.

The REACH Foundation's core mission is centered around ensuring people have access to quality, affordable health care and public services so that they can work and take care of themselves and their families – thereby contributing to community well-being and the state's growth. An important factor in improving health is the public's ability to express its needs and priorities through democratic processes, including voting.

Over the last seven years, REACH has looked to ways to strengthen Kansans' engagement in public policy. We've supported policy analyses, voter education and outreach to legislators to make sure all Kansans have a voice in policies that impact their lives.

Ballot drop boxes have been a popular method for Kansans to cast their ballot due to the convenience for people who work or have other obligations that make it difficult for them to get to a polling place on election day.

There has been no evidence of widespread ballot box tampering or abuse, and election officials have not identified any particular risks to using ballot boxes. Ballot boxes are safe and secure. We believe Kansas lawmakers should work to ensure that voting is accessible – not to eliminate options or create the impression there is a risk where no problems have been found. Kansas has a long history of election integrity. Election officials have testified as to the election processes and have stated repeatedly these changes will not add to election integrity and in fact will suppress voting.

The REACH Foundation urges the Committee to consider the state's strong record of election integrity and refrain from actions that would take away avenues for participation in elections.

Sincerely,

Brenda R. Sharpe, President and CEO
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