

February 14, 2023

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs

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TITLE: Kansas Citizen

EMAIL ADDRESS; capsonks@aol.com: OPPONENT

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: WRITTEN

BILL NUMBER: SB 209, requiring mail ballots by 7 pm Election Day

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Opponent

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written

Dear Chair & members of the committee,

I am writing to voice my opposition to bill SB 209 which would require mail ballots to be in 7 PM Election Day

Please do not require that all advance ballots be in by the 7 PM closing of the election day polls. It is not necessary to change the current law which allows for delays in the delivery of ballots postmarked by the postal service BEFORE OR ON Election Day. Actual in-person voters are allowed to cast their votes after 7 PM if they are in line, and that is the right thing to do!

The only reason for changing the current law is deliberately trying to disenfranchise voters. Some voters may legitimately wait closer to Election Day to make sure they have the latest information, or they may have mailed their ballots in time, but there was a weather or postal delay. In fact, postal service has declined in recent years, making delays more likely!

Voters choose advance ballots for many valid reasons: convenience, being unable to vote in person safely, being away from home due to work or vacation or schooling, lack of transportation, desiring a paper ballot, needing extra time to fill out the ballot, concern about bad weather and more. This should be a non-partisan issue as these reasons cross all demographics. Voters should be ENCOURAGED to vote by advance ballot and **should not be disenfranchised by an early cutoff in they mailed it in time!**

One presidential year, I had my advance ballot but had not voted yet as I'd planned to vote closer to Election Day. Suddenly there was a family emergency: my mom had unplanned surgery out-of-state so I had to leave immediately. Before I left, I mailed my ballot, and I am grateful it was accepted in time.

Remember that for much of our history, it took several days to get the results of elections. Accuracy is more important than speed. The voter should not be stymied. As Abraham Lincoln said, "*Elections belong to the people.*" He didn't say the elected officials. Advance balloting has worked well for votes across our state and more voters are getting involved. It is reasonable that a ballot mailed even as late as Election Day should be counted if it arrives by the designated day. Remember the esteemed U.S. President from Kansas, Dwight D. Eisenhower, who said, "*The future of this republic is in the hands of the American voter.*"

Please **do not vote** for this bill which would take the state of Kansas backwards. Please do not require that all advance ballots be in by the closing of the election day polls.

Vote NO on bill SB 209.

Yours truly,

Alice J. Capson
Overland Park, KS]