

February 12, 2023

Testimony the Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs

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BILL NUMBER: **SB209, *Requiring mail ballots to be returned by 7:00 pm on Election Day.***

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: **Opponent**

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: **Written Only**

Chair Thompson & Members of the Committee,

I write today voicing my opposition to bill SB209, requiring all mail ballots to be returned by 7:00 pm on Election Day.

Legislators should not need schooling on the US Constitutional requirement that all states have a representative form of government with elections and majority rule. Likewise, I will spare you a historical refresher on the number of laws that have sought both to expand and shrink access to the voting booth. SB209 does not stand alone in the statehouse barn this year, but has been well-groomed with other restrictive elections bills since recess and now is trotted out of the stall for the 2023 KS Leg session.

The kinds of elections bills we should be discussing are those that remove barriers to voting and restore confidence in the public that their election officials and elected representatives are committed to allowing every citizen to exercise their rights equally and fairly.

Indeed, in March of 2017, then Secretary of State Kris Kobach testified that he welcomed a discussion on how to best process ballots returned by mail, citing the decreased the number of locations the USPS had to sort mail in the state and the increased amount of time needed to transmit mail. He cited further concern that many people would wait until the last minute to return by mail their ballots. He unequivocally supported the change to the law you are now suggesting we revert to.

SB209 is not a pro-democracy, supportive voting bill. Vote no on SB209.

Leslie D. Mark

*Mission Hills, HD 25 / Sen 7*