

Kansas Federal and State Affairs

Monday, February 20, 2023

SB208 Neutral Written Testimony

Chairman Thompson, members of the Committee, my name is Mike Brown, I am the Chairman of the Kansas Republican Party and I am submitting neutral testimony regarding SB208. I have chosen to submit neutral testimony for several reasons. While I appreciate the committee's desire to create guidelines and try to improve security regarding ballot drop boxes I would ask the members to consider the following before voting to pass this bill as written out of committee.

- 1) Statute is currently essentially silent when it comes to the use of ballot boxes in Kansas. Ballot boxes have been used for the last couple of election cycles even though the legislature has never directly codified their use. I strongly urge the committee to consider specifically PROHIBITING the use of ballot boxes in Kansas.
- 2) The security of the ballots placed in a ballot box cannot be assured. Ballot harvesting cannot be prevented when unsupervised, unsecure boxes are available and most of our 105 counties depend on County Clerks and their staff to manage and monitor boxes with limited staff available.
- 3) Having traveled to all 105 counties and courthouses across Kansas in 2022 and having spoken to many County Clerks in those counties, I would offer the observation that our clerks are already spread very thin as they are mentioned in Kansas Statute with responsibilities over 1,000 times. The County Clerks made it known in my travels that they simply do not have the time or resources to be also in charge of watching a ballot drop box placed in their office.

For these reasons, I urge caution on passage of SB208 and ask this body to consider a substitution bill to eliminate ballot drop boxes across Kansas which would raise confidence in the elections process and would eliminate one of the responsibilities of our amazing County Clerks.