

Rija Nazir

Resident of Wichita, Kansas

Opponent of HB2056

For the Committee on Elections

January 26, 2023

Chair Proctor, Members of the Committee,

I appreciate you all giving me the time today to speak in regard to House Bill 2056. I am a resident of Wichita in House District 85, and I am opposed to this bill.

As someone who has been an avid voter since turning 18, I have seen firsthand how much our elections have grown in the last four years. New and seasoned voters alike continue to show us how they feel about their voices being heard at every level of our country's government.

With the influx of voter participation in recent years, extreme wait times on election day have also grown to become common among many of our counties. During the August 2022 Primary election, I opted to vote at my polling location that typically takes me five minutes to check in, vote, and head out. That day, I had taken me over an hour to even get to the check-in table. With the aid of more mail-in ballots being used, this issue can be significantly reduced in addition to regulated far more accurately. The grace period of these mail-in ballots allows for voters to have an equal opportunity and right to their vote as those waiting in line.

But I don't need to tell you this: mail-in ballots have been a verified method of our elections for decades. However, the uncertainty being put into the minds of voters about the integrity of their mail-in ballots is causing an even larger issue than necessary. The rules for submitting a vote should not change for those who wish to do so by mail. With a change of this magnitude, thousands of voters would have their rights disregarded simply due to their ballot's uncontrollable time of arrival. Since the beginning of the pandemic, our elections have been safe, secure, and valid due to the solid structure of our voting methods.

During the August primary, the Maize Recreational Center had turned away over 100 voters who had been waiting in a line wrapped around the building for hours. I thought about how this would translate to other methods of voting aside from election day, and the outcasting of mail votes that have already been sent out equates to pushing away in-person voters before 7pm.

In summary, I ask, you all to consider maintaining the integrity among all voting methods and vote no to HB2056. Thank you for your time and I hope you consider all voters when making your decision. I will gladly stand for questions when appropriate.