

**March 9, 2023**

**Testimony to the House Elections Committee**

**NAME:** Deborah Kitchin

**TITLE:** Kansas Citizen

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**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.

My husband, son, and I have used advanced ballots to vote for many years. Because of SB 208, which removes dropboxes, our family may have to return ballots in the mail if our college and work schedule does not allow for us to take our ballots to the election office.

My mail service has been unreliable since 2017. You enacted the three-day grace period in 2017 to account for this degradation in service. It made sense when mail processing centers closed. Mail service is still unreliable. This is not the voter's fault.

In addition, I have friends and family who have been away at college and needed to return their ballots via the mail service. Their ballot had to be resent to them, and as a result, while they were postmarked prior to the election, they arrived a day or so after the election.

In 2022 in Johnson County, 575 valid ballots were received within the three-day period. Without current law, these Kansans' votes would have been thrown out.

The votes of every eligible voter should be counted. Cutting off the voters who, through no fault of their own, had their ballot delayed through the mail suppresses the voice of Kansas Citizens. Every vote matters, and every voice should be heard.

Please vote no on bill SB 209.

Deborah Kitchin

Kansas Citizen

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