

Legislative Testimony

In Opposition of SB 366

Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs

January 24, 2024

| WRITTEN ONLY |

Chairman Thompson and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB366. On behalf of the ACLU of Kansas, I am writing to express our opposition to SB366. The ACLU of Kansas is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization with more than 35,000 supporters across Kansas that works to preserve and strengthen the civil rights and liberties of every person in our state. While I understand the importance of addressing various aspects of our electoral system, I believe it is essential to consider the potential consequences and implications of specific provisions.

I wish to highlight our opposition to three particular aspects of the bill:

1. Restriction on Mailing of Advance Ballot Applications: While the intention may be to centralize the application process, this restriction raises significant concerns. It limits the ability of individuals and organizations to engage in voter outreach and assist eligible voters in the application process. Such a restriction may inadvertently suppress voter participation, particularly among marginalized and underrepresented communities.

2. Voter Request Requirement: The bill further mandates that election officials can only mail advance ballot applications to voters who specifically request them. While it is vital to prevent unsolicited mailings, this provision might go too far in limiting the ability of election officials to proactively inform and engage voters about their voting options. We should strive for a balance that ensures voters are well-informed and can easily access the ballot.

3. Prohibition of Application Pre-filling: The bill also makes it illegal to pre-fill any part of the application, including the voter's name and address. While error prevention is a valid concern, this prohibition could create unnecessary hurdles for both voters and organizations working to facilitate the voting process. The ability to assist voters with filling out applications accurately can be critical, especially for those with limited resources or accessibility challenges.

In conclusion, SB366 should be reviewed carefully, and these particular provisions should be reconsidered as these rules may inadvertently create unnecessary barriers and complications for both voters and organizations aiming to promote civic engagement.

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