

February 25, 2025

House Committee on Elections
State Capitol
300 SW 10th Street
Topeka, KS 66612

Re: Health Forward Foundation opposition to Senate Bill 5 – restrictions on funding for elections.

Chair Proctor and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Health Forward Foundation (Health Forward), I submit this letter of testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 5. Health Forward works to support and build inclusive, powerful, and healthy communities characterized by racial equity and economically just systems. We oppose this legislation as it will make funding elections much more difficult and lead to inequitable funding for rural counties. Ultimately, this will make participating in elections more difficult, and according to the Health and Democracy Index, the more inclusive and expansive voting access is, and the election process as an extension, the better the health outcomes are for a state.

Health Forward opposes SB 5 as it makes funding from the federal government for elections even more inconsistent and hard to come by than it already is. According to the [Bipartisan Policy Center](#), federal elections funds are typically used to upgrade election systems, maintain voter registration databases, and support overall elections infrastructure. However, state governments have often not been able to keep pace with these needs given limited funding and competing compelling needs in state budgets. Where funding to maintain the integrity of elections is limited, the voting experience is less convenient and efficient at best and, at worst, elections are less secure and less fair. SB 5 would exacerbate these issues.

SB 5 would also have inequitable impacts on rural communities as they have difficulties maintaining and upgrading their elections systems. Indeed, following the 2022 midterms, the director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) reported that [rural areas in the U.S.](#) needed additional resources to maintain their secure elections but were not getting the funding from federal or state legislators to do so.

Health Forward asks legislators on this committee to vote no on SB 5. We would instead encourage the legislature to work with federal counterparts to secure more funding for elections. Please feel free to contact me at nmadden@healthforward.org if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Respectfully,

Nathan J. Madden, Ph.D.
Impact Strategist – Policy, Health Forward Foundation

**OUR
PURPOSE**

Every day we work to support and build inclusive, powerful, and healthy communities characterized by racial equity and economically just systems.