

Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share my voice today. As a lifelong Kansas citizen, I am writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 105, which seeks to strip the Governor of the authority to appoint replacements for vacancies in key statewide offices and transfer that power to a newly created legislative committee. This bill is an unnecessary and undemocratic overreach that undermines the will of the voters who elected the Governor to lead our state.

For decades, Kansas has trusted our Governors, whether Republican or Democrat, to make these appointments when necessary. This process has ensured stability and continuity in our government, reflecting the mandate given to the Governor by the people. SB 105, however, introduces an unnecessary layer of legislative interference, circumventing the power that Kansans have vested in our executive branch.

The ability to fill vacancies in the offices of U.S. Senator, State Treasurer, and Commissioner of Insurance should remain with the Governor, as has always been the case. This bill creates a partisan and bureaucratic process that diminishes the role of the Governor and places appointment power into the hands of a select group of legislators. This is a fundamental shift in our balance of power, one that is not in the best interest of Kansans.

Additionally, SB 105 would tie the Governor's hands by requiring appointees to match the previous officeholder's political party affiliation for six years prior to the vacancy. This restriction places partisanship above qualifications and could prevent the most capable candidates from serving the people of Kansas.

The people of Kansas elect their Governor with the understanding that they will be empowered to make critical decisions, including filling unexpected vacancies. SB 105 undermines this fundamental principle and weakens the executive branch's ability to effectively govern.

I urge this committee to reject SB 105 and preserve the authority of the Governor to make these appointments without unnecessary legislative interference. Let's respect the choice of the voters and maintain the balance of power that has served our state well.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Brittany Stotler