

Opponent Testimony on House Bill 2438

House Committee on Elections

Sean Hinton - Overland Park District 48

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Chair Proctor and House Election Committee Members,

Voter registration websites have become a staple of our modern democratic system. They have served as a great equalizer in voting access, and they have functioned as a cornerstone in helping voters exercise their rights. Mister chair and the committee, I oppose Section 2 of HB 2438 because the state of Kansas should not hinder the operation of proven and effective voter registration websites that many voters rely on.

It would be a great disservice to Kansans if these foundational tools for voting rights are hampered. Many Kansans who have any difficulties registering through mail or other methods depend on these services, and a restriction on their access would simply be unfair for these people. Websites like these also help protect the voting rights of Americans and Kansans by helping them exercise their right to vote, and by making it fairer and easier for eligible voters to register, our democracy will be strengthened. Because of the integral function of these voter registration websites, a fundamental ban on these sites until 2027 as provisioned by Section 2 of this bill would effectively weaken our democracy and attack our most sacred right of voting.

I also understand the need to protect voter information. Registration does require sensitive information like dates of birth and ID numbers. I do agree this information should be secured by registration sites however the state should not be enforcing a regulation and ban when it will not allow any websites to pass its requirements until 2027. Therefore, I recommend that the committee remove Section 2 from this bill and create an amendment requiring the Secretary of State to proactively provide a legitimate way for existing sites to meet these regulations starting after the publication of this bill. If neither of these protections for our voting rights are met, I recommend the committee oppose HB 2438 in its entirety.

Overall, restrictions and an effective 1 year ban of voter registration websites would be an attack on the voting rights of every Kansan, and it would be utterly disrespectful to voters and our democracy if well established websites that many Kansans depend on were taken down. Therefore, I recommend this committee oppose Section 2 of HB 2438, so Kansans can continue to depend on these foundational websites for our democracy.