

Jonathan Smith

Private Citizen

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Opponent Testimony for HB 2438 (written-only)

House Committee on Elections

Good morning Chair Hendricks and Committee Members,

I'm finding it increasingly strange how little warning Kansans are getting in regard to the ability to submit testimony before hearings this legislative session. I fear for the precedent that this practice is setting in regard to democratic transparency in government. Regardless, I appreciate you taking the time to hear my thoughts, and I urge that you oppose HB 2438.

It is my opinion that HB 2438, if allowed to be law, would only make registering voters harder than it already is, and strangely, it would give far more power to the singular secretary of state, rather than each county's election office. I don't understand the benefit of such a sweeping amount of power to one office, and this rapid consolidation of power regarding the ability to decide voter registration in the state of Kansas seems inappropriate in a time where we see the enormous downsides that come when power is consolidated and unchecked.

The current system works just fine, and our election office, to my understanding, hasn't expressed any concerns about irregular voter registration practices, and the fact that all voter registration has to go through our local election office and be checked against our county's voter roles, all-the-more proves how unnecessary, unneeded, and frankly unasked-for this legislation would be.

I urge you to focus more on policy choices that would increase voter *participation* in elections so that we can see far more than just the piddly 25% turnout that Johnson County reported in last year's election. Frankly, I see these abysmal election turnout numbers strongly correlated with a lack of creativity and productive legislation coming out of the Elections Committee. Please do try harder to increase voter turnout numbers, rather than make it harder to register new voters, or for voters to check their voter registration year after year.

Thank you for your time, and obviously, vote no on HB 2438. What a very silly thing to consider, and I would find it quite embarrassing to attach my name to such a bill.

Thank you again,

Jonathan Smith

Voter in Shawnee County

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