

**SCOTT SCHWAB**

Secretary of State



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## STATE OF KANSAS

January 16, 2026

### Testimony on HB 2452 (Oral Neutral)

House Committee on Elections

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

Chair Proctor and members of the Committee:

The Kansas Secretary of State takes a neutral position on HB 2452, as it represents a public policy decision for the Legislature. The Secretary of State does, however, wish to offer the following comments regarding implementation considerations.

If enacted, the bill would impose significant administrative challenges on county election officers in several respects. The more complex the election administration, the greater the risk of administrative errors.

- It will exponentially increase the number of ballot styles due to school district boundary lines and member district lines not following precinct lines or county lines. Odd-year elections are currently conducted by precinct part, even-year elections by whole precinct. There are approximately 4,100 precincts in Kansas with registered voters. There are an additional 7,573 precinct parts.
  - Example: If in an even-year general election where there are 10 ballot styles, in an odd-year election there may be 50 ballot styles to account for 3rd class city boundary lines, school district boundary lines and special district boundary lines. Each district boundary line adds a different ballot style that must be correctly attributed to each individual voter.
- The ballot itself will be substantially longer, which will result in voters taking longer to vote, which could increase wait time for voters. The inclusion of drainage districts in the combined election, with their unique voter qualifications could result in additional delay.
- Voter fatigue could become an issue. Voter fatigue occurs when ballots have many offices, races, or ballot measures. Voters become overwhelmed and disengaged, leading to lower participation and less informed choices. Research has shown that noticeable voter fatigue begins after 5–7 voter decisions; severe drop-off occurs with 10–15 voter decisions.
- Election administrators would be required to develop and implement procedures to simultaneously conduct two separate party primaries for partisan offices and a unified nonpartisan “jungle” primary for municipal offices.
- There is insufficient data to support the conclusion that overall election costs will increase or decrease.
  - Cost increases would come from significantly longer ballots—often spanning multiple pages and counties would likely need to purchase additional equipment and open more

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polling locations to accommodate longer in-person voting times, even though the total number of voters would likely remain unchanged.

- Cost savings would result from eliminating all routine election costs in odd-numbered years.

Lastly, the agency requests the deletion of the two provisions (in Sections 16 and 17) directing the Secretary of State to adopt regulations on ballot styles. There is nothing to regulate and no regulations were ever adopted despite the original mandate enacted in 2015. This position has been independently confirmed by two secretaries of state and several independent reviews.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Respectfully,

***Clayton Barker***

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