

Oral Opposition Testimony to the House Election Committee
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Dear Chairman Proctor and committee members

Thank you for the opportunity to share my opposition to bill HB 2452 that would move local elections in Kansas to even-numbered years.

As a voter advocate, I regularly speak with Kansans who are trying in good faith to be informed, engaged voters. What I hear most often is not apathy—it is overwhelm. People want to participate, but the volume of information, especially during even-numbered election years, can be daunting.

In even-numbered years, voters are already inundated with messaging about presidential, congressional, and statewide races. Their mailboxes are full, their phones are flooded with texts, their social media feeds are nonstop political content. By the time voters reach the bottom of the ballot, they are often afraid of making an uninformed choice, so they skip those races.

Adding local races to even-year ballots doesn't solve the problem of getting more people to vote in local races—it will likely make it worse.

Higher turnout alone should not be the only measure of a healthy democracy. Informed participation matters. When voters are given the opportunity to focus on local races separately, they are more likely to research candidates, understand the stakes, and feel confident casting a vote all the way down the ballot.

Keeping local elections in odd-numbered years also helps people build a habit of voting. Many Kansans know that there is an election every August and November, and that regular rhythm makes participation more predictable and accessible. When elections are consistent, voters are more likely to show up because it's part of their routine, not because a national race is driving attention.

Local elections deserve attention on their own terms. They should not be overshadowed by national politics or reduced to an afterthought on an already overwhelming ballot. For these reasons, I urge you to oppose efforts to move local elections to even-numbered years and instead focus on ways to strengthen voter education and engagement within our existing local election structure.