

Written Proponent Testimony on HB 2447
House Committee on Elections
Tuesday, January 27, 2026

Chairman Proctor and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 2447. My name is Mark Hamill, and I previously served as a Trustee of Johnson County Community College. During my time on the board, I worked closely with students and administrators and saw firsthand how important it is to encourage young people to take part in the democratic process.

The ability to participate in elections is essential to a strong and healthy democracy. When people are able to vote easily and understand how the process works, confidence in our elections increases. When voting is confusing or difficult, participation drops, especially among first time voters. House Bill 2447 helps address this issue by placing the presidential primary on Super Tuesday while schools and colleges are in session.

Holding the presidential primary while students are on campus will significantly increase student engagement. When school is in session, students are more connected to their communities and to each other. Student organizations, campus activities, and peer discussions help raise awareness about elections and encourage participation. Being physically present on campus also makes it easier for students to access information about voting and to plan ahead to cast their ballot.

Voting on Super Tuesday allows students to feel connected to the full presidential election process. Instead of voting after many important decisions have already been made, students can participate early and follow the election from start to finish. This helps students better understand how presidential primaries work and why their vote matters. Early participation also helps build strong voting habits that can last a lifetime.

House Bill 2447 also improves on past systems that made voting harder for students. When Kansas used the caucus system, students were often required to attend long meetings on Saturday afternoons. These meetings were difficult to attend for students with work schedules, family responsibilities, or limited transportation. The caucus process was also confusing and stressful for many first time voters.

A primary election is much easier for students to manage. Students can cast their vote at their own pace and without pressure, making the process more accessible and easier to understand for first time voters.

From my experience at Johnson County Community College, I know students care deeply about the future of our country. They want their voices to be heard, but they need a voting system that is clear, accessible, and realistic. House Bill 2447 helps remove barriers and makes participation easier for young Kansans.

For these reasons, I strongly support House Bill 2447 and encourage the Committee to do the same. This bill strengthens participation, supports civic involvement, and helps ensure the next generation of voters is engaged in our elections.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Hamill".

Mark Hamill
Former Trustee
Johnson County Community College