

HOUSE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
HB 2493 - OPPONENT, IN-PERSON TESTIMONY
JANUARY 27, 2026

Mr. Chair and Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to provide opponent testimony on HB 2493. HB 2493 is a voter suppression bill that adds roadblocks to the process of helping voters return their ballots to the local election office. The addition of being “a qualified elector” (which is not defined in the section) and the requirement of a driver’s license or non-driver’s identification card are added solely to be a hindrance to the process. There is no valid logical or security reason to require these.

Why would you need to be a qualified elector to return a ballot? Do qualified electors have some special skills or authority? What if my niece from Los Angeles was in town and offered to drive it in? A 16-year old neighbor? Would doing so make them criminals? Would you need to be a qualified elector of a drainage district? City? State? I may be a qualified elector in an election on the east side of Topeka, but not the west. Outside of Topeka but not inside. If as a county resident I deliver the ballot of a city resident, could I be charged with a crime?

The addition of a driver’s license number or nondriver’s identification card is also a roadblock and provides no additional security or transparency. It is simply a voter suppression tool. And who wants their driver’s license number on the outside of an envelope?

It appears that the goal of leadership here is to reduce the number of ballots that can be returned by anyone other than the voter to zero. No matter that this would impact the ability of thousands of shut-ins, the elderly, the disabled, and more to vote. This “death by a thousand cuts” approach is not necessary. More and more restrictions added each session. Let’s just get there. Just end it. Come out from behind the curtain and be honest with Kansas voters that the folks who are supposed to watch over elections in the Kansas House want to fix the elections and throw out thousands of votes?

I have been helping voters return their ballots for decades. Some would call me a “ballot harvester”, and I wear that badge with pride. You have heard a lot of false rhetoric in this committee about what it means to be a ballot harvester, but let me set the record straight. For most elections since I became a precinct committee person in 2002, I have worked to help my neighbors make their votes count.

Here’s how it works. About a week ahead of election day I obtain a list of neighbors who have outstanding ballots. I call them and ask if they have a plan to return their ballot. If by the Monday before the election they are still outstanding, I call them again and ask if they need assistance getting their ballot returned. If I don’t have a phone number, I might leave a

note on their door offering assistance to get their ballot returned. If they ask for help, I provide it.

But let's get real, here. There is a reason leadership keeps chipping away at mail-in ballots. It's just pure partisan politics. Democrats use mail ballots disproportionately more than Republicans. In 2024, Democrats cast about 66,500 ballots by mail to Republicans' about 62,700, even though there are nearly twice as many registered Republicans as Democrats. I think what really bothers Republicans is that some Democrat who was behind on Tuesday night comes out the winner. But that doesn't mean something wrong is going on. It just means all the peoples' voices were heard.

It should be the goal of this committee to make it easier to vote and harder to cheat. But evidently the goal here is to cheat to win. I would be glad to stand for questions.

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