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January 27, 2026 - Kansas House Elections Committee hearing on HB 2493, requiring transmitter be qualified elector and provide license number – Neutral testimony

Chairman Proctor and Distinguished Committee Members,

My name is Rick Piepho, Harvey County Clerk and Chairman of the Elections Committee of the Kansas County Clerks and Election Officials Association (KCCEOA). The KCCEOA is a statewide organization with 109 members, including all county clerks and election commissioners in Kansas. Our members are responsible for administering voter registration and elections at the local level and are committed to ensuring elections that are free, fair, secure, and efficiently administered.

I am submitting this neutral testimony on behalf of the KCCEOA membership regarding HB 2493. The intent of this testimony is to provide information from an election administration perspective and to outline general implementation and administrative considerations related to the bill as introduced.

HB 2493 would add a new requirement that any person delivering an advance ballot on behalf of the voter be a qualified elector and include the identification number of their driver's license or nondriver's ID.

County election officials currently rely on standardized envelopes and forms that include the statutorily required third-party delivery statements. Implementation of HB 2493 would require revisions to these envelopes and accompanying materials to adjust the affirmation and add a space to collect the identification number. For many counties, this would involve redesigning, reprinting, and potentially discarding existing inventories of envelopes and forms; many counties maintain significant stocks of pre-printed advance voting envelopes and materials purchased in advance of election cycles. If implementation occurs during an active election cycle, counties may be required to replace or modify these materials on short notice, which could be operationally challenging and may have cost and timing implications, particularly if the bill takes effect upon publication. Consideration of a delayed effective date or implementation aligned with the beginning of a calendar year or election cycle may help reduce these impacts.

Counties would also need to modify internal procedures to ensure the additional driver's license data is properly collected, verified, and retained in accordance with record-keeping requirements. It would be difficult and time consuming for election officials to verify the qualifications of the person designated by the voter to deliver their ballot. Election officials would need clear guidance and training regarding this verification process. It should be noted that the Kansas Constitution (article 5, section 1) defines a "qualified elector" as an individual who is eligible to be a registered voter but does not require that they actually be registered, so it could be difficult to verify the eligibility of each designee. A few questions arise regarding the intent and enforcement of this legislation: If information is omitted, or cannot be verified, should the ballot be accepted and counted or rejected? Would election officers be required to contact the voter to correct inconsistencies and/or report violations to law enforcement immediately? Additionally, the collection of additional personally identifiable information may cause issues related to the secure handling, storage and the redaction or protection of personal identity information in response to public records requests.

The KCCEOA is neutral on HB 2493 as currently presented, but we ask that the committee hear our concerns and act accordingly. These comments are offered to assist the committee in understanding potential operational and administrative considerations associated with the bill. I will gladly stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rick Piepho". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rick Piepho, Harvey County Clerk & Election Officer – KCCEOA Elections Committee Chair

Reference:

Kansas Constitution: Article 5 - Suffrage

§ 1. Qualifications of electors. *Every citizen of the United States who has attained the age of eighteen years and who resides in the voting area in which he or she seeks to vote shall be deemed a qualified elector. ...*