

HB 2448 Opponent

Dear House Elections Committee,

I urge you to reject HB 2448 and any other measures that would distinguish citizens' driver's licenses from licenses issued to non-citizens. While there may be several reasons for showing citizenship status in a driver's license, the fact that the bill is in this committee suggests to me that the intent is to have an impact on voting. Citizenship notation on a license changes the status of that document from proof of permission to operate a motor vehicle on Kansas streets and highways to a document that can be used to discriminate between residents. If this requirement -- whether in HB 2448 or in another measure -- were to become law in tandem with HB 2438, which was recommended favorably to the House by this committee, the Kansas Department of Revenue could effectively become the only entity through which Kansans could register to vote online because only the Department of Revenue would have ready access to citizenship information in its driver's license data. Such an outcome would create additional barriers to voter registration and the ballot box for many young Kansans who do not drive and who prefer to conduct business -- including registering to vote -- online. The existence of citizenship information on a driver's license also raises the possibility that persons applying to be registered voters will be required to provide their driver's licenses at the time of application as well as at the time of voting. That would raise the barrier for convenient off-line registration at community events, schools, churches, and other venues. I urge this committee to actively lower rather than raise barriers to voter participation by rejecting both HB 2448 and HB 2438, which again resides in this committee.

Kansas has been down the road of requiring documentary proof of citizenship and was unable to successfully defend that requirement in court. If HB 2448 becomes law, a driver's license presented at the time of registration becomes proof of citizenship. While the bill on its face may seem innocent, it appears to be just one piece of an effort to reestablish barriers to registration and voting initially imposed in the *2011 Kansas Secure and Fair Elections Act*. That act was found to create significant obstacle to eligible voters' registration in *Fish v. Kobach* (No. 16-3147 (10th Cir. 2016)) and therefore to be unconstitutional.

This proposed change to Kansas drivers' licenses is not needed. It would not make our drivers or our roads safer or more secure. It could create a barrier to voting.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 2448 and any similar provisions in other bills.

Thank you for your time, attention, and service to Kansans,

Mary Galligan

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