

LOUD LIGHT CIVIC ACTION

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 Loud Light Civic Action
 Oral Opponent Testimony of HB 2453
 For the House Elections Committee

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Chair Proctor, Members of the Committee,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is Melissa Stiehler, and I serve as Advocacy Director of Loud Light Civic Action, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that supports and builds the civic engagement and leadership of young people in Kansas. We represent over 16,000 Kansans, including supporters in every House and Senate district across the state. Loud Light Civic Action’s primary goal above all else is to ensure all Kansans can exercise their right to vote in a free and fair election. It is with these values that Loud Light Civic Action opposes HB 2453.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
5 Presidential Primary VR Deadline	6	7	8	9 Last Day for Voter Registration	10	11 Voter Registration Deadline
12 Advanced Mail Ballots <i>May</i> Start	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 Advanced Ballot Application Deadline	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1 Early Voting Deadline
2	3 Election Day	4	5	6	7	8

** Above – red indicates days that are removed and green indicates days that are added from current deadlines*

Hb 2453 Proposes 14 Days Of New Barriers For Voters To Overcome In The Month Before The Election

1. Shortens The Voter Registration Period:

- Last day to register being 23 days before an election, *which would fall on a weekend*
- Practically, this means that the deadline would be 25 days before an election, “25-2311. (a) County election officers shall provide for the registration of voters at one or more places on all days except the following: (1) Days when the main offices of the county government are closed for business”
- This does not change the current voter registration deadline for presidential preference primaries, which is far more restrictive than in other elections
- **Shortening the voter registration timeline is never an acceptable option** as it is undeniably voter suppression, plain and simple. The number one reason a voter's ballot is thrown out is because they aren't registered to vote or they haven't updated their voter registration after moving. The voter registration deadline used to be 15 days before the election, then it was moved to 21 days, now this proposal makes a deadline even more difficult for voters to overcome.

2. Shortens The Advanced Ballot Application Period:

- Last day to apply being 14 days before an election
- **While mail delays are a real concern, there are a number of other options** that the state could implement to resolve this issue that does not place additional barriers on the voter like moving back election deadlines do. This could include live mail ballot tracking- like is offered in Douglas County, sending mail ballots out through overnight shipping to reduce mail times, and reinstating the grace period.

3. Ends Early Voting At Noon On The Sunday Before The Election:

- Eliminates Monday before Election Day early voting
- **This bill removes one of the few mandated early voting times.** Some counties do the bare minimum required in state law for early voting options and hours. In counties that do not offer weekend early voting, this would reduce early voting by three days.
- Monday early voting is a popular option for voters, as has been testified to this committee in previous hearings. For example, Rick Piepho, Harvey County Clerk, told KCUR “About 10% of our total (early) in-person voters (in Harvey County) vote in that four-hour period on Monday.”

Allowing Mail Ballots To Start Being Sent 2 Days Earlier Is *Not* A Fair Compromise

Allowing mail ballots to start being sent out two days earlier is not likely to have a substantial impact in comparison to the barriers voters would face if this proposal became law. First, this is just changing when counties are *allowed to start* sending mail ballots, not when they will actually be sent. Additionally, there are likely administrative hurdles with ballots being mailed on the first day of the work week, since there will not be a work day immediately before for election officials to prepare to send the ballots.

Conclusion: Loud Light Civic Action opposes HB 2453 and encourages the legislature to look to other states for best practices on voter registration & advanced voting options. Rather than creating a complicated and restrictive new elections deadline calendar, we can instead look to other states to find best practices for election administration and deadlines. We respectfully request that you look to the [20 states](#) that start sending out their mail ballots at least 45 days before the election, when Kansas is already required to send the UOCAVA ballots. We can also look to the [22 states](#) that offer voter registration throughout early voting or on election day. We recommend this committee oppose HB 2453. Thank you for your time and consideration.