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SB 4 Written Only Opponent

Chairman Thompson and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 4 with you today. My name is Rija and I am a voter in Johnson County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 4

Mail-in ballots have been a game changer for my family and me, offering us a convenient and accessible way to participate in our democracy. They allow us the time to thoroughly research candidates and ballot measures, making informed decisions without feeling rushed. While living out of state for school, we relied on mail-in ballots to stay engaged with elections in our home community. However, there were several instances when the ballots arrived late due to unavoidable circumstances.

One specific occasion stands out. After requesting our mail-in ballots well in advance, we received them just days before the election because of delays in the postal system. Determined to ensure our votes counted, we filled them out immediately and sent them back the same day. Unfortunately, extreme weather in our area caused further mail delays, and our ballots were not delivered to the elections office until after Election Day. It was only thanks to the grace period that our votes were counted.

This experience underscored the importance of the grace period for voters like us—individuals who follow all the rules but face unpredictable challenges, such as postal delays or weather-related disruptions. Eliminating this safeguard would unfairly penalize responsible voters. Instead, extending the grace period would provide greater fairness and ensure every voice is heard. Additionally, addressing inefficiencies within the postal system would reduce these delays and further strengthen the integrity of the voting process.

Our story is a reminder that democracy works best when every voter has a fair opportunity to participate. Limiting the grace period, or removing it altogether, would harm countless voters who, like us, value their right to vote and take every step to exercise it responsibly.

I thank you all for hearing my story and thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote NO of the passage of SB 4.