

January 22, 2025

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs

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TITLE: Private Citizen

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BILL NUMBER: SB 4, requiring the return of advance ballots by Election Day

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Opponent

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written Only

Chair Thompson & members of the committee,

I am writing to voice my opposition to bill SB 4.

There is no need to change the election laws regarding the three day protection period for mail ballots. Requiring them to be received by 7:00 pm on election day can lead to disenfranchised voters. We all know there are various reasons that can cause mail to be delayed. Here are just some of the issues that can happen:

- Simple mail delays on the outgoing side, incoming side, or both. The current law was put into place in 2017 with a near unanimous vote (just one no vote) when all of the USPS processing centers in Kansas closed and mail was taking longer. We still have no USPS processing centers in Kansas and mail delays have only gotten worse. This three day grace period is needed now more than ever.
- A typo in the zip code that caused the ballot to initially go to another part of the country
- A typo in the address that the Election Office caught and took time to follow-up on
- Issues with the signature on the advance ballot application (some forgot to sign, others on-line application signature didn't match their on-line voter registration signature)

Instead of removing the three day period, we should take time to educate voters on how elections work. Keep the three day protection period and protect the rights of voters.

Please vote NO on Senate Bill 4.

Jeanne Koontz
Hutchinson