



**2024 - 2025 Executive board**

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January 22, 2025 - hearing on SB 4, relating to the deadline for returning advance ballots – Opposition testimony from Rick Piepho, representing KCCEOA.

Chairman Thompson and Distinguished Members of the Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee,

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 duties are significant under statute and one of our most public facing functions is free and fair administration of elections. We take this duty very seriously. We prepare for every possible, and impossible, scenario which could occur.

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the KCCEOA membership. The KCCEOA prepared a legislative agenda which was developed through a policy committee process and agreed to by a majority of the members. One of the items specifically included is: "Maintain the status quo with regard to election, registration and canvass schedules...".

We believe that the current deadline for receipt of valid advance ballots by mail should remain. With delivery delays by the US Postal Service expected to continue, we believe that allowing ballots mailed prior to the close of polls on Election Day to be received by the 3<sup>rd</sup> day following the election ensures that valid voted ballots are accepted and included in the final results. Most properly mailed advance ballots are returned the day after the election but diminishing quantities continue to be received for many days after Election Day.

Exhibit 1 on the next page shows the advance return log for the 2024 General Election in Harvey County. A deadline of 7 p.m. on Election Day would have meant that 21 valid voted ballots would not be counted out of 791 total received by mail. Not a huge number but it adds up across 105 counties. All the ballots received after election day were postmarked, a few that were postmarked after election day were not counted. The total number of advance ballots sent and returned were higher for the 2022 General Election, but the statistics for ballots returned by the USPS are similar.

The KCCEOA opposes SB 4 as currently presented. We ask that the committee hear our concerns and act accordingly. I will gladly stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Sincerely,

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

# Official Advance Ballot

Your advance voting ballot will be separated from this signed advance voting envelope in order to guarantee the confidentiality of your vote. KSA 25-1120

## Voter! Please remember to:

- ◆ Place completed ballot in this envelope and seal securely
- ◆ Sign this envelope
- ◆ Return this ballot by 7:00 pm on Election Day

My legal residence in HARVEY County is:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ ST \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

1

### Statement of Advance Voter

**Failure to sign will invalidate ballot.**

I hereby declare that I marked the enclosed ballot and that such ballot was enclosed and sealed in this envelope by me.

Signature of Advance Voter

Date

**Sign Here**

- ☐ Optional: I hereby authorize the person who completed and is named in Statement 2 to mail or deliver my advance voting ballot.

## Additional Steps for Assisted Voters

2

### Statement of Person Assisting Voter

**Check the statements that apply**

- ☐ I hereby acknowledge that I have been designated by the voter to mail or deliver the enclosed advance voting ballot to the county election office and affirm that I will deliver such ballot as instructed by the voter and that I have not exercised undue influence on the voting decisions of the voter.
- ☐ If assisting a voter with an illness, disability, or lack of proficiency in the English language, I hereby affirm that I have not exercised undue influence on the voter's decisions and have marked the ballot as instructed by the voter to whom the ballot was issued.

☐ I have not transmitted or delivered more than 10 advance voting ballots on behalf of persons during the election in which the ballot is being used.

Name of Authorized Person

Signature of Authorized Person

Date

3

### Statement of Person Signing on Behalf of Advance Voter

**Only if Advance Voter is Physically unable to Sign**

My signature constitutes an affidavit that the person for whom I signed the envelope is a person who is physically unable to sign such envelope. By signing this envelope, I swear this information is true and correct, and that signing an advance voting ballot envelope under false pretenses shall constitute the crime of perjury.

Name of Authorized Person

Signature of Authorized Person

Date

FROM



First-Class  
Letter-Rate  
Postage  
Required  
Post Office  
will not deliver  
without proper  
postage



**ADVANCE VOTING BALLOT**

**Election Date**

**Voter! Please remember to:**

- ◆ Place completed ballot in this envelope and seal securely
- ◆ Sign this envelope
- ◆ Return this ballot by 7:00 pm on Election Day

**Harvey County Election Office  
800 N Main  
PO Box 687  
Newton, KS 67114-0687**

