



House Bill 2057

Kansas State Legislature
House Committee on Elections

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Chairman Proctor and honorable members of the committee, my name is Madeline Malisa, and I am a Visiting Fellow at the Opportunity Solutions Project. OSP is a non-partisan, non-profit organization. We work in more than 40 states across the country with one clear goal—to help more people achieve the American Dream. I appreciate the opportunity to speak today in support of HB 2057.

Kansas voters are passionate about the fundamental right that we all have as Americans to vote and participate in our democratic process. They don't want loopholes and weaknesses in the design of elections to threaten that right.

HB 2057 will provide important security and transparency measures for remote ballot boxes. Specifically, the bill will require that they are uniformly distributed and equally accessible to Kansas voters. It will also ensure that advance voting ballots that are deposited in ballot boxes are protected by either video recording or continuously observed by an employee of the county election office. These security measures will greatly increase voter confidence in the advanced voting process.

The bill also provides important administrative guardrails for ballot-box use, including that they be closed and not accessible when the county election office is closed. The distribution requirement is tied to population, which will assist election officials in rural and geographically large districts. The bill provides clarity for officials who are tasked with deploying and administering them.

I would like to bring the committee's attention to subsection (f). As I read the proposed language, remote ballot boxes could be installed at unsecured locations other than a county election office or satellite advance voting site. If this was the drafter's intent, I would suggest adding language that limits them to a secure government building. This will ensure that they are not installed at private businesses or other inaccessible buildings.

Ballot boxes were largely unused before the 2020 election, and states across the country have recently enacted drop box reforms. Some states like Missouri and South Carolina have prohibited their use outright, and other states like Iowa and Ohio have enacted similar security measures that protect voters who choose to use them.

The commonsense solutions in this bill will add a high level of accountability to the election process. Kansas voters should have confidence that regardless of how they cast their ballots, their votes with count. For all these reasons, I urge you to support this legislation. Thank you for your time and I'm happy to answer any questions.