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Opponent Testimony HB 2057
House Elections Committee

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First, I would like to thank Chair Proctor and the members of the committee for taking the time to read my testimony here today. I am a student living in Topeka, KS in district 55 and I ask that you please vote in opposition of HB 2057.

Drop boxes have posed no threat to our communities in recent elections or ever on any scale worth noting. Short of nonexistent, concrete, proof of massive voter fraud, working bills such as this is simply a distraction from the honest conversations of the day. Or in other words, to borrow a phrase from all of you, “this is a solution in search of a problem”.

Every bill debated is an opportunity cost. I am former debater and I know many of you were when you were in school. In traditional policy debate, you need to give a justification and lay out the harms before suggestion an affirmative plan. Or if you are a business owner, you need to know your edge, find a whole in the market. No justification actually exists here. Any claims of vote fraud are entirely theoretically, but the harm it brings is woefully real.

If this body claims to believe in putting Kansas first or in home rule, then I ask that you oppose this bill. The people of Kansas already have already voted for Secretary of State, for their local county clerks, have volunteered their time as poll workers, and kept engaged at every level in between. We need to stop talking about elections as something that happen *to us*, and take some responsibility in the fact that *we the people* put on our elections together. Rarely to claims of fraud actually get lobbed directly at the Secretary of State, they just roll in as a dark fog with no purpose or direction. It just leads to confusion and that confusion breeds anger and apathy. Some days it is hard to tell which is worse.

Our elections are safe. Taking away drop boxes just sends a message that you, agents of the government, do not yourselves believe in your peers, the government. Yes, I understand that there will always be a diversity of opinions and priorities among agencies and branches, but it seems to me that if you don’t have proof of need, you are really only insulting other hard-working Kansans working in elections, insulting their intentions and hearts and insulting their intelligence and competency.

Or, if I may speak plainly, if you are finding yourself feeling defensive, thinking “*no that’s not it all! I don’t think they are unable to run safe elections!*” then you have shown your cards. If you open your eyes to the unkind implications of the vote fraud justification, then you will see that you have laid your cards bare. Because if that is the case, the only other reason for this bill is that you just don’t want the good people of Kansas to vote. You want to add inconvenience in hopes of decreasing turnout. If you are limiting the number of ballot boxes, then Occam’s razor says that this is intention voter suppression, clear as day.

If you want to be on the same team with election workers up and down the chain of command, then recognize that elections are already expensive, these hard-working folks are already stretched to capacity, and this air of suspicion around elections is only making it harder for them to recruit strong talent.

Ultimately, only you, not I can vote on this bill today. The ball is in your court. Which will it be? I’m keeping my fingers crossed you will vote no on HB 2057. Don’t insult our election workers, there is no fraud, and do not build hurdles to accessing such a fundamental right as voting. Thank you for your consideration.