



March 7, 2023

To: Representative Pat Proctor, Chair
House Committee on Elections

From: Brenda R. Sharpe, President and CEO
The REACH Healthcare Foundation

Subject: Senate Bill 209 – Eliminating the Three-day Grace Period for Mailed Ballots

Dear Chairman Proctor and Members of the Committee:

We are pleased to provide written testimony on SB 209, which would eliminate the three-day grace period for mail-in ballots. The REACH Foundation opposes this proposed change in voting procedure, which was adopted in 2017 with strong support of legislators and has been implemented without any record of abuse.

Kansas has a history of voting integrity. County election officials have publicly stood by their dedication to ensuring that votes cast by registered voters are counted. Changing the law to require receipt of ballots at election offices by 7 p.m. on election day does not take into account the changing landscape of the U.S. mail system. This measure also would place an undue hardship on men and women in the military as well as young people attending college out of state. Moreover, Kansas voters regardless of political affiliation support measures that improve their access to voting.

Election officials have stated these changes will not add to election integrity and in fact will suppress voting. We believe legislators should consider the expertise and experience of these election administrators and consider the interests of Kansans.

The health and well-being of Kansas depends on an informed and engaged electorate. The REACH Foundation urges lawmakers to preserve and extend options for voting – not promulgate an idea that Kansas has a problem with voting procedures.

This is an opportunity to lift up Kansas's honorable record of election integrity and refrain from actions that would take away avenues for participation in elections.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brenda R. Sharpe".

Brenda R. Sharpe, President and CEO
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