



Oral opponent testimony on SB 210,  
concerning elections; relating to candidate names on ballots; allowing candidates for nonpartisan offices to  
have such candidate's political party affiliation provided on the ballot with such candidate's name.

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Before the Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee

Chair, Members of the Committee:

School board elections have long been nonpartisan because our society believes that schools should be run by local parents with the consent of voters. Our schools are stronger if we are not wasting time and effort fighting over partisan politics, but instead focusing on the nonpartisan job of educating students. There is no evidence to suggest that making school board elections partisan will advance the cause of education in Kansas and will in any way help more Kansas students become successful.

Another reason school board elections are non-partisan is because having to declare a party would take certain persons, such as military or executive branch employees, out of the ability to run and hold office. While this bill doesn't provide that school board members would have to declare a party, it would seem that one's declaring a party may be an advantage.

I will add that during KASB's regional meetings, which drew more than 100 school board members from across the state, and during our annual conference, which drew about 500 school board members and other leaders, no one mentioned wanting a bill that would allow for partisan school board elections. In addition, KASB has adopted non-partisan elections in its permanent policies.

Thank you.

KASB is a non-profit service organization built on an abiding belief in Kansas public schools. We have put the needs of students and K-12 leaders first since 1917.

Kansas Association of School Boards

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