

Testimony in favor of House Concurrent Resolution 5004
Elections Committee
Kansas House of Representatives
January 23, 2025



My journey to becoming a citizen of the United States is a testament to the values that many of us hold dear, values that are deeply rooted in faith and love for our great nation.

I was born in Brazil, a country with its own unique blend of cultures and traditions. When I was just three years old, my life took a remarkable turn. My mother met an American man who was visiting Brazil on business. They met at the office, and that encounter turned into a love that transcended borders. For three years, they exchanged heartfelt letters, bridging the physical distance that separated us all. And then, in October of 1988, my mother made the life-altering decision to move us to the United States where she married the wonderful man who's been a father to me for the last 35 years. By marrying an American, my mom and I acquired green cards, which allowed us to live and work in this country for the rest of our lives. I grew up in American schools and worked at American companies. I enjoyed a rich life. But there was one thing I couldn't do - vote. That simple act of casting a ballot in the democratic process, a privilege that many often take for granted, wouldn't be afforded to me without my swearing allegiance to the country I loved.

It was during this time that I realized the true significance of becoming a U.S. citizen.

At the age of 20, I embarked on the journey to attain my American citizenship. The process was rigorous, demanding my commitment to understanding the history, values, and principles that define this nation. It also demanded my time and money. I will never forget the pride that swelled in my heart as I chose to pledge myself to this incredible country. At age 21, I celebrated my naturalization with a party surrounded by friends and loved ones. It was a moment of profound joy and gratitude, not just for the right to vote, but for the sense of duty and responsibility that came with it.

My fellow Americans, the citizenship process is a transformative experience. It is a journey of dedication to the ideals that this country was founded upon. It is an affirmation of our commitment to the principles of liberty, justice, and the pursuit of happiness.

When we advocate for citizen-only voting, we are not merely safeguarding our electoral process; we are nurturing responsible voters—individuals who comprehend the gravity of their choices at the ballot box, who recognize that their decisions have profound consequences for our nation's future. So, let us unite in our conviction that the citizenship process is vital, that it instills in us a deeper sense of responsibility, and that it fosters responsible, informed voters who can be trusted to uphold the values we hold dear.

Today, a movement to allow noncitizens to vote in American elections is growing across the nation. Non-citizen voting is now legal in our nation's capital and 20 other cities across the country. It is only a matter of time before the non-citizen voting movement reaches Kansas. A citizen-only amendment would clarify the constitution, affirming that only U.S. citizens can vote in our elections.

Let's unite to ensure our democracy remains rooted in citizenship, responsibility, and integrity by supporting House Concurrent Resolution 5004, the Citizen Only Voting Amendment.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Avi".

Avi McCulluh
President
Americans for Citizen Voting

ONLYCITIZENS.VOTE