

STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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KEITH ESAU
14TH DISTRICT

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Elections Committee,

I represent the fourteenth district which covers northern Olathe and western Lenexa. I have been involved in the Kansas Republican Party for many years. I have been an elected Precinct Committeeman since 2004 and I served on the District and State Committees for the Republican Party from 2004 through 2012. In addition, I was the Third District Chair for the Republican Party from 2008 through 2012 and I have been active in recruiting Republican Precinct Committeepersons, legislature candidates, and other elected position candidates for almost 15 years.

I state this because I believe in the party system that we use in Kansas and the rest of the nation and believe that it is valuable to protect the integrity of that system for the benefit of all political parties. To that end, I believe that HB 2210 is a good step in protecting the integrity of each party and benefiting the electorate as a whole.

Party Integrity

I stand in support of HB 2210 for three basic reasons. The primary reason is to protect all political parties from undue influence from other parties. It appears that the motivation for people who temporarily change party registration is to affect the outcome of the opposition party in order that the candidate selected has less chance to win in the general election. In other words, they want the worst candidate of the other party to win the primary. In a system where we want the best candidate to win, this interference is hostile to the end product. The electorate is best served when each party puts forth the best candidate to represent their party, not a candidate that was chosen or swayed by the opposition.

Election Efficiency

A second benefit of HB 2210 is to reduce, even though slightly, the workload of the election offices during the busiest time of the election cycle. The primary election ballots are the most complex ballots that the election office has to deal with and the preparation for the primary is the busiest time. By reducing the number of auxiliary registration changes, resources may be better concentrated on the essential activities.

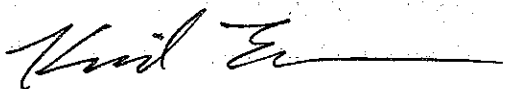
Election Analysis

I am also a software engineer that deals with statistical analysis tools. As a long time party activist, I found that there are certain pieces of election information that were difficult, if not impossible to ascertain. The most significant of these was the ability to get find out which party ballot someone voted in the primary election. The election office records every person that votes in a primary, but that information is not recorded until the weeks after the primary happens, usually as part of the certification procedure. In the meantime, people can currently change their party registration, thus making it look as if they voted a different ballot than they actually voted. Accurate analysis of election results is valuable for everyone, whether it be activists, party officials, or press.

Conclusion

For the reasons above, I ask you to support HB 2210 to ensure the integrity of partisan elections. Thank you for your time and attention to this bill.

Submitted,



Keith Esau

State Representative, District 14