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Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition of Senate Bill 211, regarding moving the current spring elections to August and November of even number years.

As Cowley County Clerk I also serve as the Election Officer with a staff of four including myself. Cowley County population is 36,311. School district boundaries do not follow traditional precinct lines and often times cross County borders. Candidate information has to be passed on to other counties for placement on that county's ballot.

Anytime there is exchange of information along with the additional busyness of the Presidential Election cycle the possibility that a candidate name will be misspelled or worse completely left off the ballot increases. Not only do school district elections create complexities due to crossing county boundaries they also create a substantial number of additional precincts. With each additional precinct follows increased costs. The additional races will also increase the length of the ballot which will cause each paper ballot to continue on to a second page increasing the complexity of the election for the voter and also increasing costs.

Increasing voter turnout is something Election Officers statewide are concerned with and we continually try to think of ways to generate more interest in elections. The complexities that are caused by combining the City/School Election to even number years will create significant cost increases that will not be offset by the cost saving of eliminating the spring elections. If they were moved to odd years in the fall these complexities would not occur any differently than they currently happen in the spring.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Karen D. Defore
Cowley County Clerk/Election Officer