Sedgwick County Election Office
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February 5, 2020

Honorable Kansas State Representative Bill Sutton
Chair, House Elections Committee

Re: House Bill 2512

Chairman Sutton and Distinguished Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you regarding House Bill 2512. Today, I will be providing testimony in opposition to this bill.

As you are all aware, Sedgwick County is anxious to be able to allow our voters to "vote anywhere" using the vote center model as passed by the legislature last session. We are confident in our processes we have used in the past but a recent change in policy from the Secretary of State has me concerned.

Yesterday afternoon the Secretary of State's office alerted county election officials to a change to how we will access the state voter registration database. We do not have all the facts about how this will work and I am concerned that these changes could impact our processes in passing data between the electronic pollbooks and the voter registration database.

I am concerned that House Bill 2512 takes away my discretion, as county election officer, to make the final determination for each election. The decision for each election will be based on our testing and our vendors' preparedness. My concern with the language contained in House Bill 2512 is that if passed, I will be mandated to utilize election day vote centers, even if something unexpected arises with one of our vendors which would make it ill advised to continue.

Because this years election cycle promises to be significant, we respectfully request that a decision on this matter be reached no later than March 1st. How we program and prepare for election day is different if voting is precinct specific or if vote centers will be utilized. We begin planning and programming our elections months in advance and if a change is made after March 1st, it will interfere with our ability to be properly prepared for the upcoming elections.

Thank you for your time and I am happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Tabitha Lehman
Sedgwick County Election Commissioner