

Testimony Opposing House Bill 2054
African American Democratic Caucus of Kansas
January 26, 2021

To the Elections Committee Chair and members

The African American Democratic Caucus encourage you to oppose the passing of HB2054.

This bill will unravel the decades long work of our organization that encourages voters to actively engage in their right to vote.

HB 2054 does not appear to provide a justified rationalization as to why this bill is needed or even if it was written to address an issue. One would anticipate that as a representative of the Elections Committee the desire would be to ensure increase in voter engagement rather than placing disingenuous limitations designed to simply suppress voter empowerment.

This bill would adversely impact our senior citizens who are active voters as many may not have family members or caregivers to assist them in delivering their ballots or they may not have family or caregivers whom they trust to assist them in getting their votes delivered.

HB 2054 would also negatively impact our low-income citizens and disabled population because of limited or no access to transportation to get their votes delivered.

Thus, three subsets of our state's community could lose their right to vote, many of which fought historical challenges to be able to vote. It is hopeful that this committee's focus is not to set voting rights back in time.

In 2020, the State of Kansas noted an unprecedented number of ballots were received because citizens were encouraged and driven to assist their friends and neighbors in delivering ballots when the voter was unable to do so. There is currently a process that accommodates names of those consented by the voter to deliver their votes.

The Election Office did not indicate there have been issues that would require limiting those authorized to deliver ballots on behalf of others. So, why would the "Election" Committee take it upon themselves to trample on the voting rights of Kansas citizens, especially since there has been no documented evidence to support that improprieties exist?

This bill appears to only limit access and suppress voting opportunities for our seniors, disabled and low-income populations - the very populations that this committee should be protecting rather than suppressing. This bill should not be considered further.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry L. Crowder
Chair