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## STATE OF KANSAS

**Testimony: HB2332 (NEUTRAL)**  
House Elections Committee  
Thursday, February 18, 2021

Chairman Carpenter and members of the Committee:

HB2332 would require third parties who send voters an advance by mail ballot application to make it clear it is from a third-party and not a government document. As with most other bills not introduced by our office, we are neutral on this legislation but believe it nicely addresses growing concerns with voter information in Kansas.

It is not uncommon for third parties to engage in voter outreach efforts, especially in a major election year. In 2020, Kansas experienced a noticeable increase in third party voter engagement efforts. Although nothing in state law currently prevents these entities from engaging in such efforts, our office aggressively encouraged Kansans to not participate, particularly with third party advance by mail ballot applications.

Many third parties have sincere intent to encourage voter participation. However, their mailings may not collect information required by federal or state law, resulting in incomplete mail ballot applications. For instance, state law requires a government issued identification number or a copy of a government issued ID with advance by mail ballot applications. In addition, a voter signature is required for those who wish to request an advance by mail ballot. If a voter does not provide that information, their application is incomplete.

Leading up to the 2020 general election, state and county election offices were inundated with calls from confused voters who submitted an advance by mail ballot application but continued to receive unsolicited advance ballot applications from third parties. This created a substantial workload increase for local election offices who had to process thousands of duplicate forms at a time when county election officers were preparing for a high turnout, statewide election, in the middle of a pandemic.

State law does not prohibit third parties from retaining personal information for data collection purposes. In 2020, thousands of Kansas voters received multiple mailings from the Center for Voter Information based out of Springfield, Missouri. The mailings started as advance by mail ballot applications and then shifted to candidate endorsements. Some of the mailers had the local election office as the return recipient but many had the Springfield office as the return address. Again, this caused widespread confusion among voters who continued to receive these mailings in September and October of last year.

Our office appreciates the committee's consideration of this issue. We look forward to continuing to work with elected officials throughout Kansas, encouraging voters to not provide information to third parties and, instead, request an advance by mail ballot application with our office or local election offices.

Respectfully submitted,

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