



House Bill 2053

Kansas State Legislature
House Committee on Elections

January 31, 2023

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Chairman Proctor and honorable members of the committee, my name is Madeline Malisa, and I am a Visiting Fellow at the Opportunity Solutions Project. OSP is a non-partisan, non-profit organization. We work in more than 40 states across the country with one clear goal—to help more people achieve the American Dream. I appreciate the opportunity to submit this written testimony today in support of HB 2053.

Kansas voters are passionate about the fundamental right that we all have as Americans to vote and participate in our democratic process. They don't want loopholes and weaknesses in the design of elections to threaten that right.

Consistency and oversight are crucial to successful election administration and voter confidence in election results. HB 2053 will specifically task the secretary of state with adopting rules and regulations for the use of remote ballot boxes by county election officers. A uniform process that specifies these requirements will greatly increase election integrity and voter confidence.

Some of security measures that are worth considering include:

- Requiring that they be placed in government buildings and monitored 24/7 by security cameras or observed by an election official when open for use.
- Requiring individuals who return ballots to them provide identification.
- Requiring that they be uniformly distributed and equally accessible to all voters based on population.
- Requiring that the boxes themselves be tamper-proof and accessible only during business hours.
- Requiring a bipartisan team retrieve and the deliver the ballots on a daily basis.

I would like to bring the committee's attention to subsection (b). As I read the proposed language, remote ballot boxes could be installed at unsecured locations other than a county election office or satellite advance voting site. If this was the drafter's intent, I would suggest adding language that limits them to a secure government building. This will ensure that they are not installed at private businesses or other inaccessible buildings.

Ballot boxes were largely unused before the 2020 election, and states across the country have recently enacted drop box reforms. Some states like Missouri and South Carolina have prohibited their use outright, and other states like Iowa and Ohio have enacted similar security measures that will protect voters who choose to use them.

These commonsense solutions will add a high level of accountability to the election process. Kansas voters should have confidence that regardless of how they cast their ballots, their votes with count. For all these reasons, I urge you to support this legislation. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to submit this testimony.