



February 20, 2023; 10:30 am

Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee

Sen. Mike Thompson, Chair

Jae Moyer

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Mainstream Coalition

Opponent Testimony, Oral Via WebEx

SB208– Restricting the number of remote ballot boxes that may be used in each county and requiring certain monitoring conditions for such use.

Chair Thompson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony on SB208.

Mainstream Coalition OPPOSES SB208. In 2020, every county securely utilized the use of advance ballot drop boxes, and there is no evidence that this process did not ensure the safety of any of our elections in Kansas. Furthermore, restricting access to these ballot drop boxes could severely impede Kansans' access to vote.

There is strong bipartisan support for keeping ballot drop boxes accessible. Kansas' very own Secretary of State, Scott Schwab, has repeatedly supported the use of advance ballot drop boxes while a number of other Kansas legislators have also spoken out against restrictions. Non-partisan local election officials across our state have spoken against the proposed restrictions when they appeared in the legislature before. There is also evidence across the state that Kansans have a distinct interest in making sure the jobs of elections administrators, from local commissioners to the Secretary of State, run as smoothly as possible.

We also believe that these bills are an answer to a problem that doesn't exist. Data and evidence show us that there is no proof of election insecurity and voter fraud in Kansas, so by focusing on bills such as this one, our government is essentially squandering taxpayer dollars, while also passing legislation that could be potentially harmful to those very taxpayers in the long run. This in turn makes it harder for them to cast their ballot and use their voices to participate in a truly representative process.

Advance ballot drop boxes create a more equitable way for voters to cast their ballots. Voting is one of the main ways that Kansans can participate in our democratic process. When we vote, we are exercising our right to participate in the civic process, and it is the duty of our

elected officials to respect that process. By limiting lawful opportunities for casting our votes, you are limiting our rights and our voices. We urge our government officials to not only allow their constituents to express the personal responsibility they have to cast their ballots, but to help them practice that responsibility in ways that are convenient and effective for them. Kansas hosts a diverse population, therefore, other avenues of voting such as by mail, at an early polling location, or in a drop box near them must be accessible in order for our elections process to remain fair, representative, and secure.

For all these reasons, we ask that you OPPOSE SB208. Elections in Kansas are fair and secure the way they run now. Please continue that tradition by voting against SB208.