



**OPPOSITION TESTIMONY on HB 2054** – Limiting who may deliver advance ballots, placing limitations on the number of such ballots that a person may deliver and establishing criminal penalties for violations.

**Testimony of:** Kendall Seal, Director of Advocacy,  
American Civil Liberties Union of Kansas

**House Committee on Elections – Thurs., Jan. 28, 2021 at  
3:30 p.m.**

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Chairman Carpenter and Members of this Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony. My name is Kendall Seal, and I am the Director of Advocacy with the ACLU of Kansas. We are a nonpartisan, non-profit organization that works to preserve and strengthen the constitutional liberties and rights of all Kansans. One of those constitutional rights is at stake in HB 2054. This bill will lead to voter suppression and unnecessary litigation and expense for the State of Kansas.

At the start of Session, when this Committee heard from the Secretary of State, he and his team reported the election could not have gone any better from their perspective. In fact, some suggested we must be cautious with how we tinker with state election law. The Secretary of State claims to want to give Kansas voters a good voting experience. This bill does not support this mission. In fact, it will not only fail to give people a good experience, because it does not recognize the reality of people's lives, communities, or relationships of trust; it also puts up very real road blocks for voters, and will result in the disenfranchisement and punishment of Kansans.

First, this bill is an example of government overreach into people's lives. It erodes their civil liberties because it directs them to trust only certain categories of people to drop off their ballots at a drop box, county clerk's office, or polling location.

Second, this bill makes felons out of neighbors helping neighbors. For example, under this bill a trusted friend from a house of worship could not assist their neighbor with dropping off a ballot. It will criminalize volunteers from community service organizations and non-profits helping to get out the vote. It will prevent rural Kansans without nearby family members or long term, trusted caregivers from voting.

Finally, the proposed punishment does not align with an actual widespread problem. As written, this bill creates another crime to toss even more nonviolent people in prison and run up the state's expenses. This contradicts testimony this Legislature's own commission just received. This bill will not result in a good use of state resources and it will disproportionately impact seniors, the disabled, people of color, and rural voters.

HB 2054 will not make Kansas elections better. It should not pass out of this Committee as drafted.

Thank you again for your consideration. I am happy to answer questions or be of additional help to this Committee in their efforts to improve the election process, increase citizen participation, and give Kansans the voting experience they deserve.