



TESTIMONY OF
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IN SUPPORT OF SB 130
KANSAS HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS
MARCH 14, 2019

Thank you, Chair Sutton, and members of the Committee for affording us the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 130.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Kansas is a non-partisan, non-political membership organization dedicated to preserving and strengthening the constitutional liberties afforded to every resident of Kansas. We work to preserve and strengthen our constitutional rights and freedoms through policy advocacy, litigation, and education. We proudly serve over 40,000 supporters in Kansas and represent more than 1.7 million supporters nationwide.

We urge you to support SB 130 as it is a sound policy that will benefit voters and allow more eligible votes that should be counted to be counted.

Voters think their mail-in ballot counts, but sometimes it does not because of signature mismatch.

2016

The national average for ballots rejected on basis of signature mismatch in 2016 was 27.5%. In Kansas, 4361 mailed ballots were rejected in 2016; 493, 11.3% of those ballots, were rejected because signature mismatch.¹

2018

In the 2018 primaries, Johnson County rejected 153 ballots on the basis of signature mismatch.² This may seem like a small number of voters, but some primaries in the state of Kansas were decided by single digit differences. Beyond that, every vote that can count, should count.

SB 130 requires county clerks and elections commissioners to attempt to contact a voter to tell them their vote did not count, and give them a chance to correct a signature mismatch.

We urge you to vote yes on SB 130, since it provides a fix for voters who may be unaware that their ballot, which they took the time to fill out and mail in advance, was not counted. It honors the votes of citizens who are participating in democracy even when they may not be able to physically go to the polls to cast a vote. No matter how many are impacted, the priority of free and fair elections, a foundational democratic concept, must ensure every vote counts.

¹ https://www.eac.gov/assets/1/6/2016_EAVS_Comprehensive_Report.pdf

² Hammet v. Metsker https://www.aclukansas.org/sites/default/files/field_documents/18cv05173_15881796.pdf