



February 20, 2019

Madame Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Board of Sedgwick County Commissioners, thank you for this opportunity to provide neutral testimony on S.B. 130, AN ACT concerning elections; relating to advance ballots; amending K.S.A. 2018 Supp. 25-1122 and repealing the existing section.

Sedgwick County has no concerns with S.B. 130. In fact, it is my understanding that our Election Commissioner is here today and stands in support of the legislation.

I am appearing before you today requesting that you consider amending S.B. 130 by adding language that would, at the discretion of a county election officer, allow voters in a county to vote at any polling location. This allowance is actually contained in S.B. 129, which has been assigned to this Committee, and will be heard on Friday.

Current law allows for citizens to vote at advance polling locations throughout Sedgwick County. However, on Election Day, the law requires voters to vote at their assigned polling place. Voting machines and technology used for elections in Sedgwick County would allow for voters to vote at any polling location on Election Day. Sedgwick County believes this change would not only allow more citizens to vote, but make it easier and more convenient for them to vote as well.

By way of information I would point out that this allowance would be at the sole discretion of each county's election officer and no county would be required to offer this option for voting. In addition, I have spoken with Kansas Secretary of State Scott Schwab and he has stated that so long as the allowance is at the option of the county election commissioner or county clerk, then he has no opposition to the policy.

Thank you for your consideration and we ask that when you work S.B. 130 that you please would please include the following language -

*“At the discretion of the county election officer, all voters within a county may be allowed to vote at any polling location on election day, provided all rules and regulations are followed as established by the secretary of state for such purpose.”*

Respectfully submitted,

Jason P. Watkins