



2020 - 2021 Executive board

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February 15, 2021

Honorable Kansas State Representative Blake Carpenter
Chair, House, Elections Committee and Distinguished Members of the Committee

Re: Opposing House Bill 2319, relating to the deadline for returning advance ballots

Chairman Carpenter and Distinguished Committee Members,

I am the Harvey County Clerk and Election Officer and chair of the elections committee of the Kansas County Clerks and Election Officials Association (KCCEOA). I am submitting this letter opposing HB 2319 on behalf of the KCCEOA membership. I thank you for your time in considering our opinions.

The KCCEOA prepared a legislative agenda which was developed through a policy committee process and agreed to by a majority of the members. One of the items specifically included is: "Maintaining the status quo with regard to election and canvass schedules".

We believe that the current deadline for receipt of valid advance ballots by mail should remain. With delivery delays by the US Postal Service expected to continue, we believe that allowing ballots mailed prior to the close of polls on Election Day to be received by the 3rd day following the election ensures that valid voted ballots are accepted and included in the final results. Most properly mailed advance ballots are returned the day after the election but diminishing quantities continue to be received for many days after Election Day.

We also believe that some statutory authority should remain to extend the deadline if necessary. The Secretary of State did not use the power to extend the deadline during the pandemic in 2020, but there may be need to extend the deadline for an unknown future event.

The KCCEOA opposes this bill. I will be happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Sincerely,

Rick Piepho
Harvey County Clerk & Election Officer – KCCEOA Elections Committee Chair