



**TO:** Chair Senator Olson and members of the Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs

**DATE:** Hearing Thursday, **February 17, 2022**; **WRITTEN and VIRTUAL TESTIMONY**

**RE: OPPONENT; SB445**, relating to advance voting ballots; prohibiting the use of additional ballot boxes;

**FROM: Cille King**, Advocacy Chair, 785-766-6992; cilleking@gmail.com, League of Women Voters of Kansas

The League of Women Voters of Kansas opposes SB445. We believe that limiting ballot boxes to be inside the election office or the satellite advance voting site and only available during office hours unnecessary restricts who can use a ballot boxes to:

- those who can get off work to drop their ballot during office hours,
- those who have the ability to park their vehicle and get inside the building.

This bill also appears to remove the ability to drop ballots at any polling place on election day.

*(i) No county election office shall use any form of ballot box for the deposit of advance voting ballots except the locked ballot box located at the county election office or satellite advance voting site..*

Drop boxes are designed in close collaboration with election officials to ensure that ballots can't be tampered with or damaged. They have sloped tops to remove rain, flanges above the slots to prevent water into the box, slots that only accept one or two ballots and access doors designed so they have to be locked shut, making it impossible for a worker to forget to lock them. They weigh roughly 1,000 pounds and are bolted to the ground. They have video scrutiny.

During his presentation to the House Elections Committee on Feb 8, this year, Kansas Secretary of State, Scott Schwab, said that drop boxes are secure and more reliable than the U.S.P.S.:

- ballots go directly to the County Election Office instead of being sent out-of-state for processing,
- ballots are collected by election workers – one from each party,
- drop boxes are under video scrutiny, unlike U.S.P.S. drop boxes, so if someone was trying to deposit more than the legal limit of 10 ballots, they would more likely use the U.S.P.S box,
- drop boxes are emptied at 7 p.m. on election day and locked so that no more ballots can be dropped,

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League of Women Voters of Kansas

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- drop boxes have been successfully used for decades.

SOS Schwab did mention that he would like to see regulations regarding ballot drop boxes so that all counties were handling them the same way. He suggested that regulations be put in writing regarding cameras, timing and frequency of removing ballots, and procedures for election workers. At no time did Secretary Schwab suggest that ballot boxes be limited to inside election offices and only available during working hours.

In Kansas, mail ballots are only sent to those who have filed a request for a mail ballot and have provided their government issued photo ID. Ballots are tracked and only accepted if signatures match to the voter that has requested the ballot.

We ask you to vote NO on SB445 so that voters have adequate secure methods to vote.