

SCOTT SCHWAB
Secretary of State



Memorial Hall, 1st Floor
120 S.W. 10th Avenue
Topeka, KS 66612-1594
(785) 296-4564
sos.kansas.gov

STATE OF KANSAS

Testimony: HCR5015 (PROPONENT)

House Elections Committee
Thursday, March 11, 2021

Chairman Carpenter and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on HCR5015 and H.R.1. Our office continues to review the bill and its implications with our fellow Secretaries of State, the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS), and members of the Kansas federal delegation. Although we have a multitude of questions and concerns with H.R.1, our testimony today focus on the election administration provisions of the bill.

H.R.1 impedes upon state's rights by federalizing election administration; interferes with state statutes governing election administration; and includes mandates that are impossible to meet, contradict existing law, or rely on expensive or non-existent technology. This legislation would create a one-size-fits-all approach that imposes drastic changes to existing election procedures in Kansas and undermines the trust and security of our elections.

Despite historical challenges, the 2020 elections reaffirmed Kansas is a voter friendly state where voters have multiple options for how to cast their ballot safely and securely – through advance by mail ballot, advance in-3the first time, Kansas' election system has 25 years of experience and has developed the institutional knowledge, procedures, and infrastructure to securely process the anticipated increases in mail ballot use throughout the 2020 election cycle. Kansas election system's ability to handle substantial mail ballot surges in the 2020 election demonstrates the election system's capabilities and the importance of local control for election administration.

Local election officials throughout Kansas work diligently to administer safe, secure, and trustworthy elections. The proposed policies in H.R.1 devalues their knowledge and expertise and places an even greater burden on these dedicated public servants by imposing burdensome, costly changes to election administration.

Additionally, H.R.1 would cause significant disruption to the administration of elections and destroy the cherished, long-held election practices of the Kansas electorate. Although voters may not always like the results of the election, they trust the results. This legislation would impose unfunded mandates and significant changes to Kansas elections, ultimately eroding voter trust in our elections.

The "For the People Act" does not reflect the values of Kansas voters and undermines the expertise of our local election officials.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Koupal
Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
Communications & Policy