



EQUALITY ♦ LAW ♦ JUSTICE

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**February 7, 2023**  
**Opponent for HB 2190**  
**Oral Testimony**

**Chairman Proctor and members of the committee:**

My name is Mike Burgess. I am the Director of Policy & Outreach at the Disability Rights Center of Kansas (DRC). DRC is a public interest legal advocacy organization that is part of a national network of federally mandated organizations empowered to advocate for Kansans with disabilities. DRC is the officially designated protection and advocacy system in Kansas. DRC is a private, 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, organizationally independent of state government and whose sole interest is the protection of the legal rights of Kansans with disabilities.

Voting is a fundamental right for the citizens of Kansas, including Kansans with disabilities. In general, DRC is not supportive of policy changes that will limit options or make it more difficult for Kansans with disabilities to either vote or have their vote counted.

In 2002 as a part of the Help America Vote Act, Congress created the Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access (PAVA) program to help educate individuals with disabilities about their voting rights, to help them register to vote, and to do outreach with voters with disabilities, their family members, and providers about disability voting rights. As I have mentioned before, in Kansas the Disability Rights Center of Kansas is the designated PAVA program.

If the committee decides to move this bill forward, please consider exempting the Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access program from the provisions of this bill as we use plain language information specifically about the rights of voters with disabilities and including how to register to vote. As I read the bill, the information we use on our website (that is not a government website) would also be excluded from being able to be used in our work as the PAVA program.

Additionally there are many Kansans with disabilities who are able to meet the statutory requirements to become eligible voters, including the photo ID requirements, who do not have a valid Kansas driver's license nor a Non-driver Identification number. Unfortunately with the Kansas Department of Revenue online voter registration tool, a voter is required to have either a Kansas driver's license or non-driver identification card number to be able to register to vote on that website. There absolutely should be an option for Kansans with disabilities (as well as all other Kansans who would meet the statutory requirements as qualified electors) to be able to register to vote online and the committee should take that into consideration.

I ask you to please consider the compounding impact of all of the policy changes that create barriers for individuals to vote. While each individual change may seem small, it will definitely make it more difficult for Kansans with disabilities to vote and have their vote counted.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this bill. I would be happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.