



TESTIMONY OF JOEY HENTZLER
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KANSAS APPLESEED CENTER FOR LAW AND JUSTICE

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KANSAS SENATE COMMITTEE ON ETHICS, ELECTIONS, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
SUPPORTIVE TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 43
FEBRUARY 19, 2019

My name is Joey Hentzler; I am the director of advocacy for the Kansas Appleseed Center for Law and Justice, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to the belief that Kansans, working together, can build a state full of thriving, inclusive, and just communities.

Kansas Appleseed is Supportive on Senate Bill 43.

Kansas Appleseed is in favor of permitting citizens to register to vote on election day. Expanding access to the vote is a central part of Kansas proud history. In 1912, eight years ahead of the nation, women won suffrage in Kansas - only the 8th state to expand equal voting rights to women. We urge the members of the committee to continue this Kansas tradition of enfranchisement.

Research has shown that same day voter registration increases access to the ballot. The six states with the best voter turnout in the 2016 general election were all states with election day registration: Minnesota (74%), Maine (73%), New Hampshire (73%), Colorado (72%), Wisconsin (71%), and Iowa (69%). Voter participation for states with election day registration was 7 points higher than states without it on average during the 2016 election cycle. Similar trends were seen in the 2012 general election: voter participation was 10% higher among states with election day registration than those without it. Moreover, on average 1 in 10 voters living in states with election day registration utilized that option.

Voting is a right, not a privilege. The Kansas legislature should take every means possible to expand access to this right and to encourage equal participation in the civic life of our state.