

**Kansas State Legislature**  
**Ethics, Elections and Local Government Committee**  
**Testimony of Andy Tuttle in Support of SB 412:**  
**Providing a Permanent Absentee Ballot Choice for**  
**Kansas Voters**

My thanks to the Committee for accepting my statement for the record of this important hearing. I am Andy Tuttle, President of the Kansas State Association of Letter Carriers, and a member of the National Association of Letter Carriers, which represents 280,000 members nationwide.

I am also a resident of Lawrence and a member of Branch 104 of the NALC. Our state association represents 2,547 active and retired city letter carriers in Kansas.

I write in support of SB 412, the subject of today's hearing. This legislation would give Kansas' registered voters the option to permanently choose to vote with an absentee ballot, improving both the convenience and the efficiency of our state's electoral system. Both the Kansas State Association of Letter Carriers and the National Association of Letter Carriers fully support the rights of our citizens to vote at home with the security and ease provided by mailed-out ballots.

Today, many of our citizens struggle to balance their daily lives with working, caring for their families and participating in our democracy when it comes time to vote at a polling place – even after allowing for complicating factors such as the severe weather and other unexpected developments. My members face the same challenges. That's why our

existing option to vote absentee is so important. SB 412 improves the voting experience further by allowing our citizens to sign up to vote at home just once, which will also save election officials time and money as well.

As our motto says: "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." This especially holds true as Kansas letter carriers work as late as necessary on Election Day to pick up and deliver every last absentee ballot -- to ensure that every one of our fellow citizens' votes will be counted.

We also make sure that undeliverable mailed-out ballots are returned to election officials to help them keep their registration and voter address lists accurate.

As letter carriers and postal employees, we undergo rigorous background checks by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Beyond that, as a matter of professional practice, and in accordance with federal law, we take our duty to protect the sanctity and privacy of mail very seriously – a principle that is especially important for the treatment of ballots. You can trust our members to do this, just as the overwhelming majority of Americans trust the Postal Service.

In fact, the Postal Service is America's most trusted agency and has been for decades. An October 2019 poll by Pew Research found that 90% of Americans have a favorable view of the Postal Service – a view held equally by Democrats and Republicans.

I am sure we all agree that voting is a sacred duty. Under current law, having a no-excuse option to request a mailed-out ballot makes this easier. Enacting SB 412 is the next logical step to make it even easier – and more efficient for the admirable public servants that conduct our elections.

In 2018, more than a quarter of American voters cast a ballot delivered by mail. Letter carriers are proud to do our part to help ensure that every citizen of Kansas and the United States has the opportunity to vote in our great democracy.

Thank you for allowing me to testify and I hope you will support this vital legislation.

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