

June 18, 2026

Connie Schmidt
Johnson County Election Commissioner

Commissioner Schmidt:

Voting is the foundation of our democracy, and its strength depends on whether every eligible voter can access the ballot in a meaningful and practical way. The recent closure of early voting locations undermines the very foundation of democracy—free and accessible participation in the electoral process. When access to the ballot is reduced, so is the promise that every eligible voter can meaningfully exercise their right to vote. We write to express serious concerns regarding the closure of eight advance voting locations and formally request that all advance voting locations be reinstated for the 2026 General Election.

We recognize and commend the Johnson County Election Office for a series of administrative improvements that will expand participation and improve accessibility throughout Johnson County, particularly the increased number of secure ballot drop boxes and the expansion of early voting hours and uniformity across all advance voting locations. These changes will help reduce confusion and broaden access for eligible voters.

At the same time, we remain deeply concerned by the elimination of eight advance voting locations, which accounted for 39,653 early votes in 2024, approximately 19% of all early votes cast in Johnson County.¹ We respectfully urge you to reconsider this decision and recommend that all previously existing locations be reinstated for the 2026 General Election. These closures were implemented in a county that relies heavily on advance voting and without opportunity for public input, placing disproportionate burdens on low-income voters, voters of color, elderly voters, voters with disabilities, and communities with limited access to transportation.

For many voters, particularly those balancing multiple jobs, relying on public transportation, or managing caregiving responsibilities, proximity to advance voting locations is not simply a convenience but a necessary condition for meaningful participation. The removal of these advance voting locations risks longer travel times, increased congestion at remaining sites, and heightened barriers for communities already facing systemic obstacles to participation. While we support efforts to strengthen geographic distribution of advance voting locations, such efforts should not result in the elimination of established and accessible locations.

We continue to support election practices that are fair, accessible, and inclusive. Accordingly, we respectfully request that all advance voting locations be reinstated for the 2026 General Election to ensure all voters retain practical and equitable access to the ballot.

¹ Johnson County Election Office. (2025). *Advance Voting Numbers*. Johnson County Election Office. <https://www.jocoelection.org/advance-voting-numbers>.

We appreciate your continued commitment to administering elections that are secure, transparent, and accessible to all eligible voters in Johnson County, and welcome continued engagement on how best to strengthen voter access while maintaining efficient election administration.

Sincerely,

Sharice Davids, United States Representative

Dinah Sykes, Kansas Senate Democratic Leader

Brandon Woodard, Kansas House Democratic Leader

Ethan Corson, State Senator and gubernatorial candidate

Cindy Holscher, State Senator and gubernatorial candidate

Linda Featherston, State Representative

Mari-Lynn Poskin, State Representative

Rui Xu, State Representative

Heather Meyer, State Representative

Dan Osman, State Representative

Nikki McDonald, State Representative

Becky Fast, Johnson County Commissioner

Julie Brewer, Johnson County Commissioner

Kevin Deneault, Olathe City Council

Matthew Schoonover, Olathe City Council

Richard Borlaza, Overland Park City Council

Drew Mitrisin, Overland Park City Council

David Waters, Mayor of Westwood

Steph Becker, Westwood City Council

Spencer Day, Westwood City Council

Curt Skoog, gubernatorial candidate