

# Municipal Testimony

In **Support** of Resolution 2025-12

Prairie Village City Council

December 15th, 2025

Good evening, Mayor Mikkelsen and Council members,

My name is Logan DeMond, and I'm the Director of Policy and Research at the American Civil Liberties Union of Kansas. We are a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with more than 35,000 supporters statewide that works to protect and strengthen the civil rights and liberties of all Kansans. We thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of this resolution, which calls for collaboration between the Secretary of State and the Johnson County Election Commissioner to translate election-related materials, from voter registration forms to information about upcoming elections, to website content and even ballots and sample ballots.

At its core, these efforts are about making it easier for eligible citizens to fulfill their patriotic duty and participate in our elections. This non-binding resolution recognizes that voters who cannot understand their ballot cannot fully participate in our democracy. When notices, instructions, and ballots are only available in English, thousands of voters are effectively shut out of a process that should belong to all of us. This is not a hypothetical problem—it is a real barrier faced by the nearly 10 percent of Johnson County residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino, and for many of whom Spanish is their primary language. For these voters, translated election materials are not simply a convenience, but a prerequisite for meaningful participation after they have already overcome untold hurdles and followed the full path to citizenship. This resolution provides them with the reassurance that their elected officials support the inclusion and full participation of all eligible citizens, which sends a powerful message in a time of uncertainty and unprecedented threats to our democracy.

This council is not alone in recognizing these problems. In 2024, the Wyandotte County Commission unanimously passed this resolution. In September, Roeland Park adopted a similar resolution unanimously. And your own Diversity Committee voted twice—each time unanimously—to advance these recommendations. Collectively, these actions demonstrate a clear and growing local desire for meaningful, prompt reform and the expectation that election materials meet the needs of all voters.

We are seeing a clear and growing consensus: Kansas communities want elections that are accessible and inclusive. Nothing in Kansas or federal law prevents the Secretary of State or the Election Commissioner from implementing these recommendations voluntarily. While federal law requires translation in certain jurisdictions, it sets the floor—not the ceiling—of what is

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possible. And in jurisdictions across the country, not a single legal challenge has been brought with respect to violations of federal law.

Providing translated materials strengthens confidence in elections and makes it easier for eligible citizens to vote, not harder. Voters overwhelmingly support these measures, with a recent poll touting 56% support across party lines along with two-thirds of Johnson County voters. These are not radical measures, but common-sense solutions.

This resolution tells the Secretary of State that Prairie Village believes access to the ballot is a right, not a privilege for those who exhibit English fluency. It signals that this community understands democracy works best when everyone can participate fully and confidently. Passing this resolution reinforces Prairie Village's commitment to fairness, inclusion, and equal access under the law and sends the message that in this city, democracy belongs to everyone.

On behalf of the ACLU of Kansas, I encourage you to support this resolution and continue Prairie Village's leadership in ensuring that our elections and approach to governance reflect the values of access, dignity, and participation for all.

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