



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
FOUNDATION

Kansas

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October 3, 2018

By Email: dc Cox@fordcounty.net

Ms. Debbie Cox
100 Gunsmoke Street
Dodge City, KS 67801

Re: Election Administration and Polling Places in Dodge City.

Dear Ms. Cox:

Thank you for agreeing to speak with me this Friday, October 5, 2018, at 9:00am. In advance of our call, I wanted to write to you with some concerning information we have received from Ford County constituents about the way elections are run in Dodge City. We would appreciate hearing your response to these constituent concerns and any additional information you may have on these matters. Reports made to us over the past several weeks have included the following information:

Historical Polling Place Concerns

- As recently as 2002, Dodge City had several different polling stations and voters were assigned to polling locations in close proximity to their neighborhood. Over a decade ago, Ford County closed all polling stations in Dodge City except for one.
- Dodge City's only polling location has a total of 13,136 voters assigned to it, making it the most burdened polling place in all of Kansas.¹ The next largest polling place is in Wichita and has only 7,661 voters assigned to it—almost half the number of voters assigned to Dodge City's polling place. Meanwhile, polling sites in Kansas on average have only 1200 voters assigned to them.
- Garden City, a city of comparable size to Dodge City, has six polling places for voters.²
- Dodge City's main polling place for many years has been the Civic Center, which is located in the North part of the city just within city limits. The

¹ This information is taken from public records capturing voter data from the 2016 general election.

² Finney County's polling locations are available at <https://www.finneycounty.org/447/Polling-Locations>.

Civic Center is in one of the only wealthy, vast majority-white neighborhoods in Dodge City.

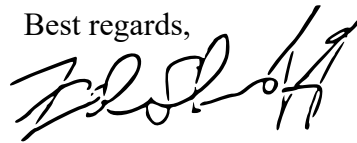
- Dodge City is one of Kansas' only majority-minority counties and more than 50% of the population is Hispanic, and yet Ford County and Dodge City in particular have historically never had Hispanic officials in elected office.

Immediate Polling Place Concerns

- While the Civic Center is under construction, the only polling place for Dodge City has been moved to the Western State Bank EXPO Center outside of the city limits, in a place with no accessible public transportation.
- Meaningful notice has not been provided in either English or Spanish to adequately inform voters of the recent change in polling location.
- Freight trains bisect Dodge City during midday and during other important times when people who want to access the polls may be unable to cross the city to vote at its only polling station.

We look forward to speaking with you about any responses you have to the above information, your current polling practices, and any steps you are taking to improve polling conditions in Dodge City.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zal Shroff', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Zal Shroff

Staff Attorney

zshroff@aclukansas.org

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