

Grand Island Public Schools unequivocally opposes LB765 and urges the Education Committee to kill LB765.

Historical literature on democratic election theory fundamentally challenges the concept of requiring a majority (over 50%) of registered voter turnout as a prerequisite for a valid election. Such requirements, often termed "quorum" or "participation thresholds," are generally opposed by democratic theorists because they create significant barriers to governance and inadvertently incentivize political obstruction.

The most critical argument against requiring a majority turnout is that it effectively counts non-voters as "No" votes, subverting the will of those who do participate. This creates a situation where a measure can receive overwhelming support from the active electorate—for instance, 90% of those who cast a ballot—yet still fail simply because a total of only 49% of the registered population participated. This disenfranchises active citizens in favor of those who are indifferent or inactive.

Furthermore, majority turnout requirements encourage strategic abstention. Opponents of a measure realize that the most effective way to defeat it is not to vote against it, but to stay home and actively campaign for others to do the same. This discourages civic engagement and transforms a democratic exercise into a game of tactical silence, rather than a robust debate of ideas.

In a standard democratic election, the outcome is decided by those who show up. Placing a minimum turnout threshold grants disproportionate power to non-participants, effectively allowing their absence to cancel out the active choices of their neighbors.

From a practical standpoint, mandatory turnout thresholds create significant hurdles for local governance, particularly for essential funding measures like school district bonds. Historical data shows that typical local election turnout rarely reaches 50%. Implementing such a high bar, as proposed in legislation like LB765, creates an almost insurmountable barrier that can paralyze a district's ability to address critical infrastructure needs.

In summary, requiring a majority of registered voter turnout is a ***counter-democratic mechanism***. It rewards apathy, punishes civic participation, and provides a powerful tool for obstructionists to defeat popular measures without ever having to step foot in a polling booth.