

**Written Testimony Re: HB 41**  
**Government Accountability and Oversight Committee**  
**Wednesday, April 25, 2017 at 9:30 AM**

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Tiffany Davis and I am an attorney with the Fair Elections Legal Network (FELN). FELN is a national, nonpartisan voting rights, and legal support organization. Our mission is to eliminate barriers to voting and improve election administration across the United States. Working alongside other national and state groups, FELN works to make the processes of voter registration, voting, and election administration as accessible as possible for every American. Since 2006, our organization has been involved in supporting election reform efforts and working with non-partisan organizations to remove barriers to voting and increase voter participation. As part of our mission, we have worked with organizations and individuals in Ohio supporting non-partisan civic engagement and improvements in election administration.

I submit this testimony on behalf of FELN to urge you to hold a new hearing on HB 41 including the sub version or in the alternative, to reject the legislation as introduced.

In Committee a sub version to HB 41 was adopted. A subsequent hearing was only held on the "As Introduced" version of HB 41. At the very least there should be adequate notice and debate on the legislation including the sub version. The capacity for confusion alone warrants a new hearing.

Additionally, as the legislation stands, it would greatly limit voter access to the polls, specifically during early voting. A large number of potential Ohio voters, including young voters, would be harmed if this bill were to pass. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, since 1964, young voters between the ages of 18 and 24 have consistently lower turnout rates than all other age groups. Not surprisingly, state laws regarding voter ID have a large impact on whether or not young adults, and particularly students, vote. Moreover, youth voters are less likely than others to have the types of identification HB 41 requires.

Current practice enables early voters to vote using, as identification, the last four numbers of their social security cards. This system works. In 2016, 665,461 voters requested and cast in person domestic absentee ballots. This is more than 35% of the total number of absentee ballots requested and cast in Ohio in the 2016 General Election. Ohioans are utilizing the system in a meaningful way. Adopting the "As Introduced" HB 41 would reduce the ease of the current process. If the bill becomes law, tens of thousands of Ohio citizens who utilize the convenience of early voting will face a confusing new requirement that will require accessing IDs other than the ones currently used and will remove the method of identification that is easiest to supply- reciting the last four numbers of their social security number.

These potential voters include: the elderly who find it difficult to stand in long Election Day lines; workers who find it difficult to take off from work; caregivers and parents juggling child care; the disabled; and first responders whose schedules are unpredictable.

For these reasons, I sincerely hope this Committee holds a new hearing on HB 41 including the sub version or in the alternative, reject the legislation as introduced. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony on behalf of FELN.

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