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Members of the 132nd General Assembly:

I am writing on behalf of the Members of the Darke County Board of Elections in support of SB21. I currently serve as Director of the Board of Elections and have previously held the position of Elections Administrator. I have also served as a Voting Location Manager for several years prior to my employment with the Board of Elections office. Each election we train and employ a minimum of 172 precinct election officials (PEOs) to work our 43 precincts. Finding and keeping enough workers is a challenge every election. The passage of SB21 would reduce the stress of finding PEOs for multi precinct locations where an excess of workers are present.

Since the allocation of funds to purchase electronic poll books in 2015, we have been able to combine several precincts into vote centers. We receive feedback from PEOs every election that they have too many workers at these locations. Being able to use these extra PEOs in other voting locations, or as workers on call, would be a great help to the Board.

One major issue in Darke County is getting enough PEOs affiliated with the Democratic Party. There are currently 2,532 registered voters affiliated with the Democratic Party in our whole county. Finding 86 able and willing citizens from this small pool is a constant challenge. Being able to use just 20 PEOs from vote centers to fill empty slots in single precinct voting locations would take a mountain of stress off our election preparation efforts. The numbers in Darke County are small and may seem insignificant to some. Every county in the state is having this same issue finding and keeping enough PEOs.

Having 4 PEOs per precinct in a vote center would sometimes be necessary during a Presidential Election. Being able to reduce this number during smaller elections, or those which historically have dramatically low turnout would be a great option.

Please consider supporting SB21. Greater flexibility, cost savings, and increased efficiency is what we are trying to achieve.

Sincerely,



Luke A. Burton
Director