

Chairman Scott Wiggam
Members of the House State and Local Government Committee

Written Testimony in Opposition to HB 680
by Ellen Greene Bush

I am not someone who has had trouble voting in elections. I'm aware of the procedure for requesting an absentee ballot, I have a printer and stamps to mail the request, and I followed the changing rules surrounding the March 2020 extended primary. In fact, I was working with the Ohio Voter Rights Coalition to text voters reminding them about the extended voting period.

And yet.....TWICE I was thwarted from voting while I was out-of-state during the pandemic shut-down, despite timely mailings from my local Board of Elections. In fact, my last ballot was mailed on April 3 and arrive 3 days after the election on April 28. My problem was the result of inadequate turn-around in an unwieldy process to get a ballot.

Does it matter? Yes! There was a very close primary race between 2 candidates competing for an opportunity to run in the Ohio Senate-2 general election. And, as a matter of principle, it made me very concerned about the fairness of the general election in November, 2020.

HB 680 will make voting even harder than it was in the primary election. Rather than making it harder to vote, the legislature should be working with the Secretary of State, Boards of Elections, and voters to make participation easier.

We want commonsense reforms to our election laws that make voting more accessible, more efficient, and encourages voter participation.

1. Send prepaid postage for ballot applications & ballots. The Secretary of State and Board of Elections officials support this action and mailing of applications is already funded.
2. Allow online absentee ballot requests which save money and time.
3. Add additional early voting sites and drop boxes, rather than having only 1 per county.

I oppose HB680 and support commonsense improvements. I want my vote to count in the 2020 presidential election, as do millions of other Ohioans.

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