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Lakewood, Ohio 44107

State and Local Government Committee
Chair Scott Wiggam
Opponent Testimony on House Bill 680
Testimony of Matt Kuhns
Lakewood, Ohio resident
WRITTEN ONLY

June 1, 2020

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the State and Local Government Committee,

My name is Matt Kuhns, I am a Lakewood resident and voter, and have in the past been a poll worker. Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee as an opponent to Ohio House Bill 680.

Ohio has made significant advances since the extreme delays, and other obstacles, which met voters 16 years ago. When I discuss voter friendliness with people in other parts of the country, I advise them that a number of states would benefit from adopting various of Ohio's voting rules, even though there are areas for improvement.

House Bill 680 as-written would lead Ohio backward to the bad old days. We know, and I know from firsthand experience, that Election Day is a struggle to provide efficient government and avoid confusion even under the best circumstances. Everyone who can vote early helps both the board of elections professionals, and Election Day temporary workers. Reducing early voting would instead burden all concerned.

As this year's primary confirmed, providing an accessible election under disrupted circumstances is harder. Last-minute decisions did not help, but plowing ahead robotically would have made things even worse.

The best way to reduce confusion is not to tie election officials' hands, but to work with them ahead of time to develop plans for a more accessible election, which will help under any circumstance. Offer online requests for ballots, and mail request forms to voters with prepaid return postage; offer additional early voting sites and drop boxes. Please reinforce the progress Ohio has made by embracing these reforms, in place of the proposal in HB 680. Thank you.

I appreciate your time and consideration. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have, and may be reached at mk@mattkuhns.com or (440) 309-9724.